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May 2005

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JIMMY CHAMBERLIN

Smashing Solo Career

CHRIS WILSON

Life & Death With Good Charlotte

Jessica Simpson's R&B Dynamo

GORDEN CAMPBELL

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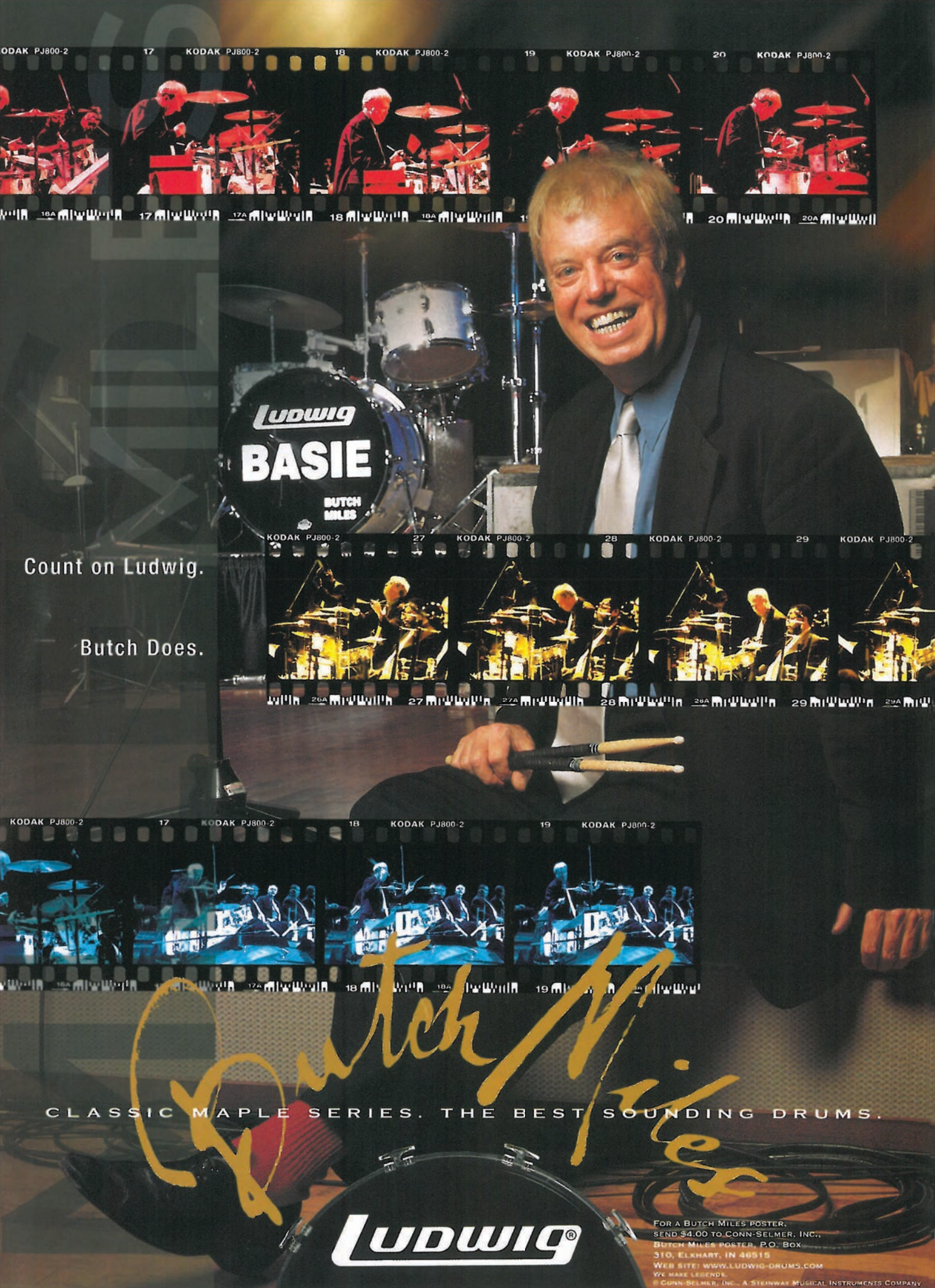
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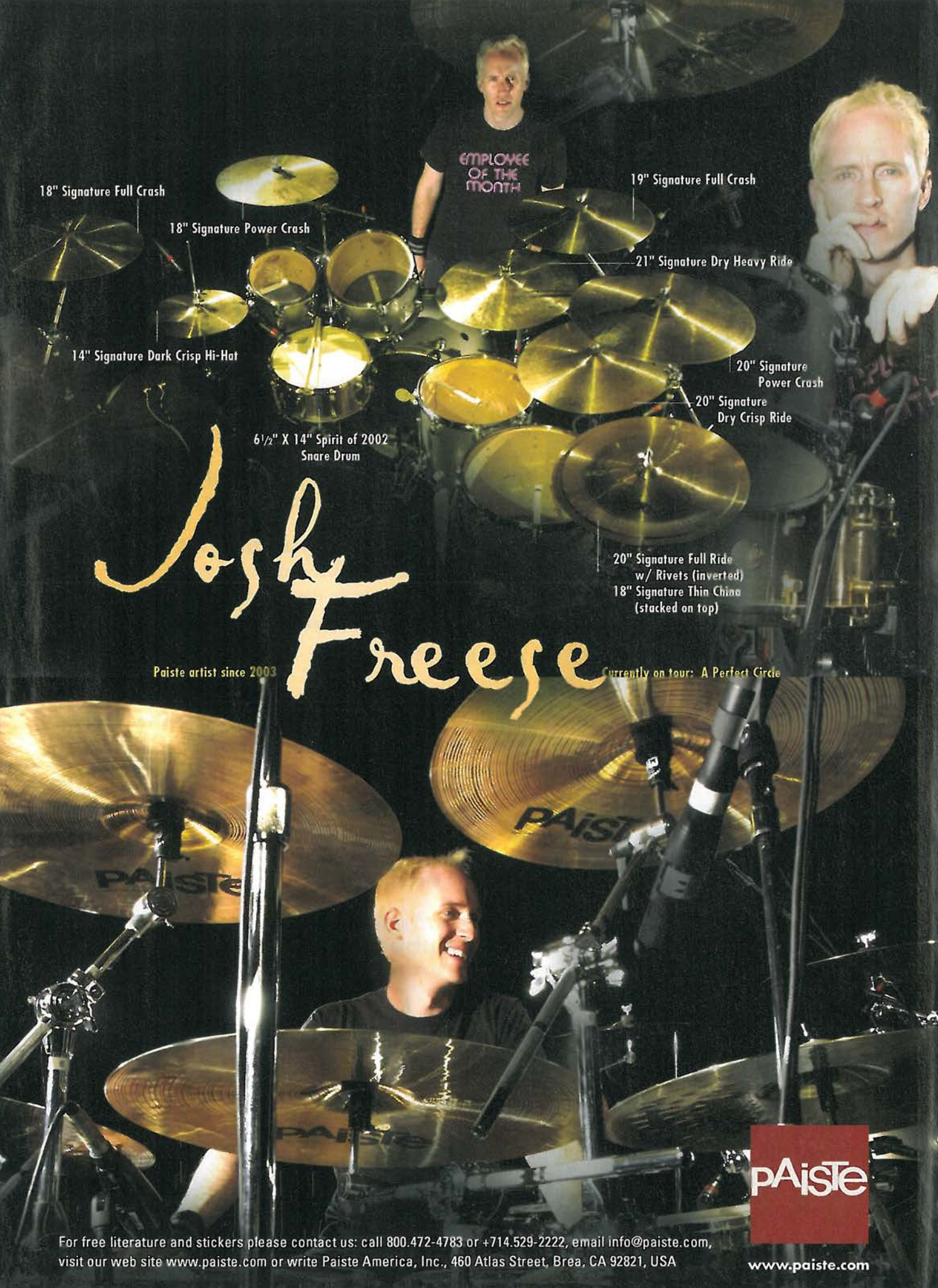
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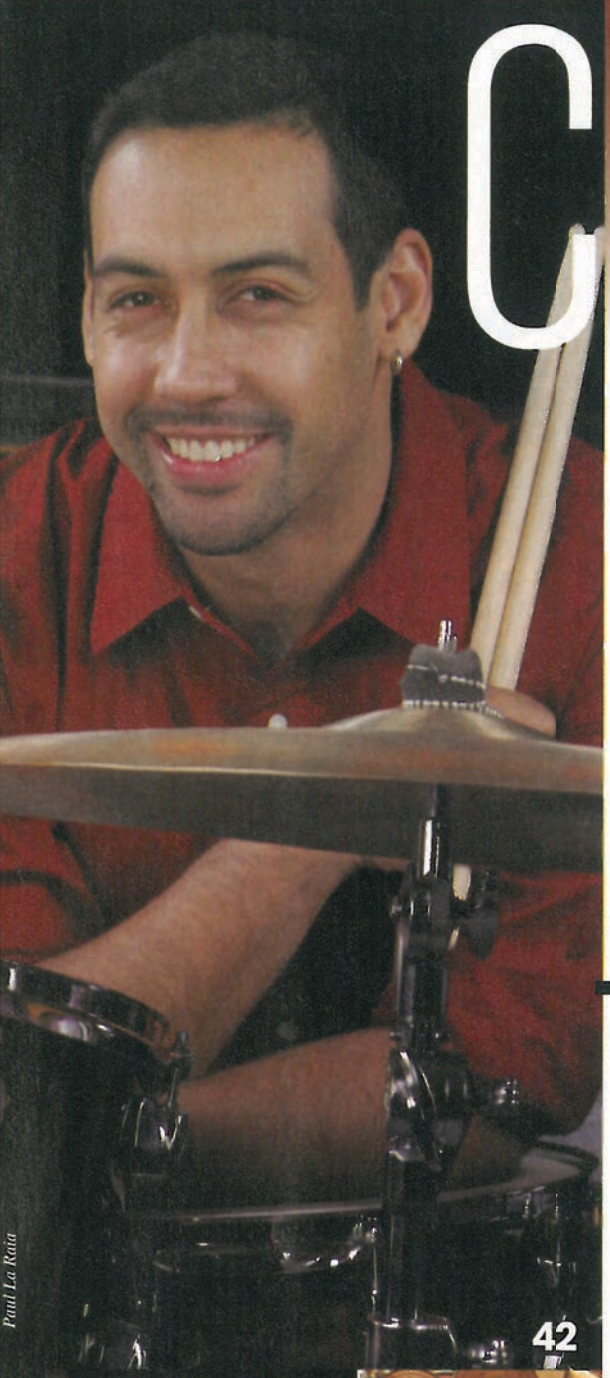
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Cover photo by Paul La Raia

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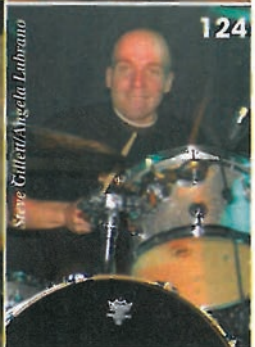
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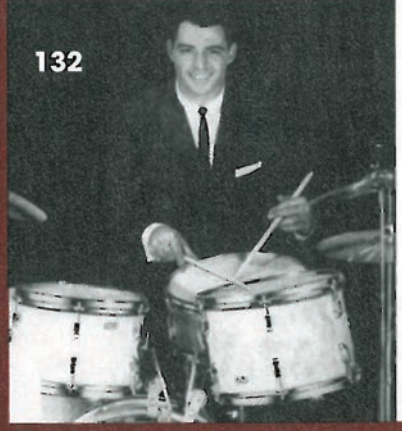

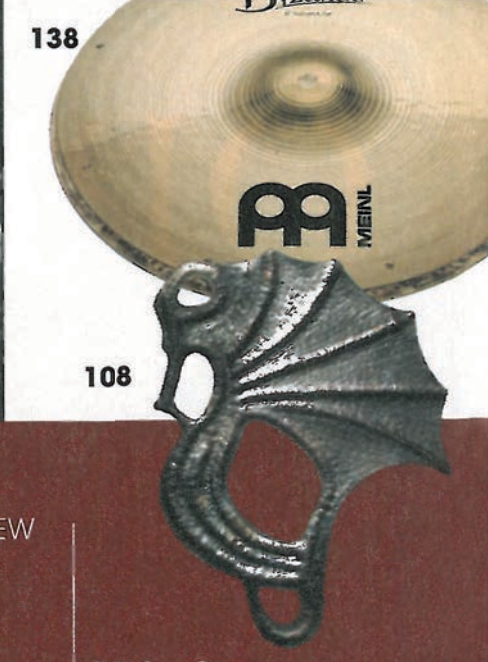

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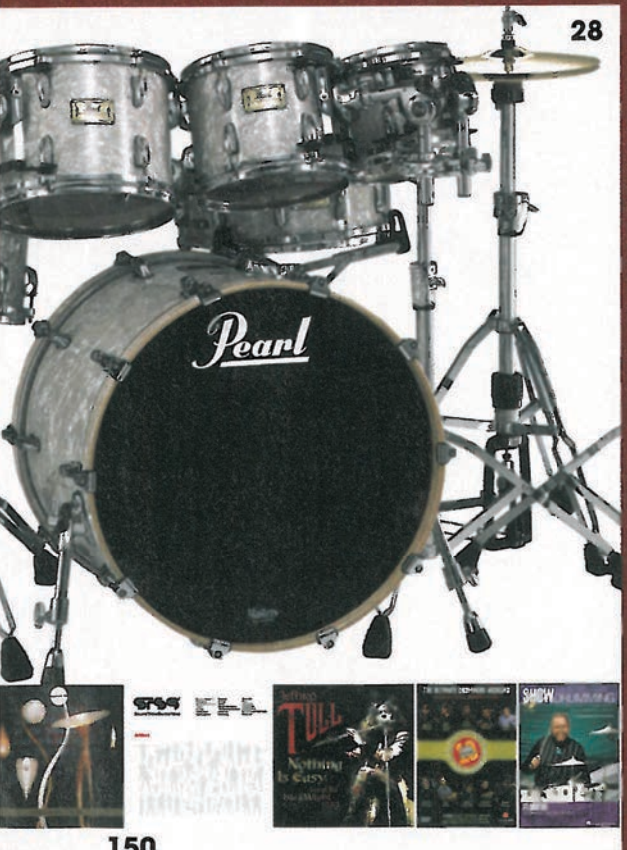

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Light My Fire

Who inspires you? Who lights your fire? As I sit here in my music room at home, I look around and realize that the strongest influences in my life are up on my wall in picture frames. In my younger days, my bedroom was covered from top to bottom with posters of drummers I aspired to play like and bands I wanted to be in—or at least sound like. Of course, my favorite pin-up girl of the month was up on the wall too...oh, you get the idea.

Anyway, as we get older, some of our early influences fade away. But what never fades is the need for *something* to light the fire of inspiration. Besides our drumming and music heroes, our influences can range from our parents and teachers to doctors, soldiers, sports figures, sons and daughters—even our next-door neighbor.

As I glance at the photos on my wall, I notice that they span my entire life. Four of the five photos have been with me for years. The last I added a year ago. Sadly, I realize that *all* of the people in the shots have moved on, in one way or another, from when I first met them. But, man, the impression they left on me is as strong today as it was when the photos were taken.

The first shot is of my dad. I still hear it all the time from family members and old friends: "You're just like your father!" Yes, I am. And I'm very proud of that!

Then there's John Lennon. Though I love all four Beatles—Ringo was the one who inspired me to play drums—John was...well...*John*.

Next is Buddy Rich. After Ringo, Buddy was my greatest drumming hero. And after Buddy it was Jeff Porcaro. At one time I bought records just because Jeff was on them. In return for my fan worship, I was introduced to *many* great artists.

The next shot is of my late boss, *Modern Drummer* publisher Ron Spagnardi. I learned *so* much from Ron over the years about so many different things. I miss Ron, and every day I wish I could thank him for all the things he showed me.

Besides Ron and my dad, I was lucky enough to meet John and Buddy. Unfortunately, I never had the opportunity to meet Jeff. But as I sit back and look at those photos, I hold many great memories in my heart. And to this day, I'm *still* inspired and influenced by these great men. Thanks for the inspiration, guys, and thank you for lighting my fire.

MODERN DRUMMER

Volume 29 Number 5

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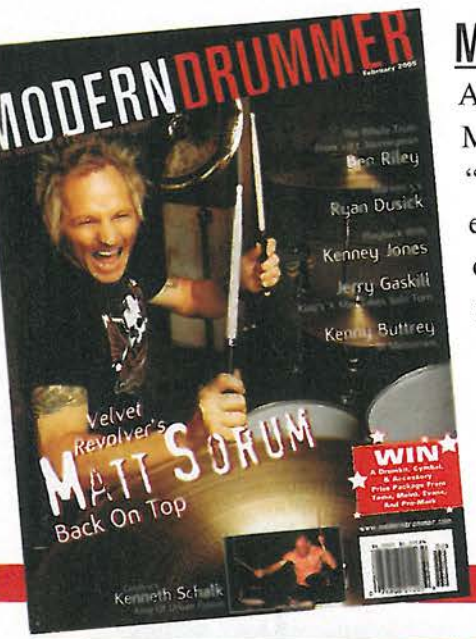
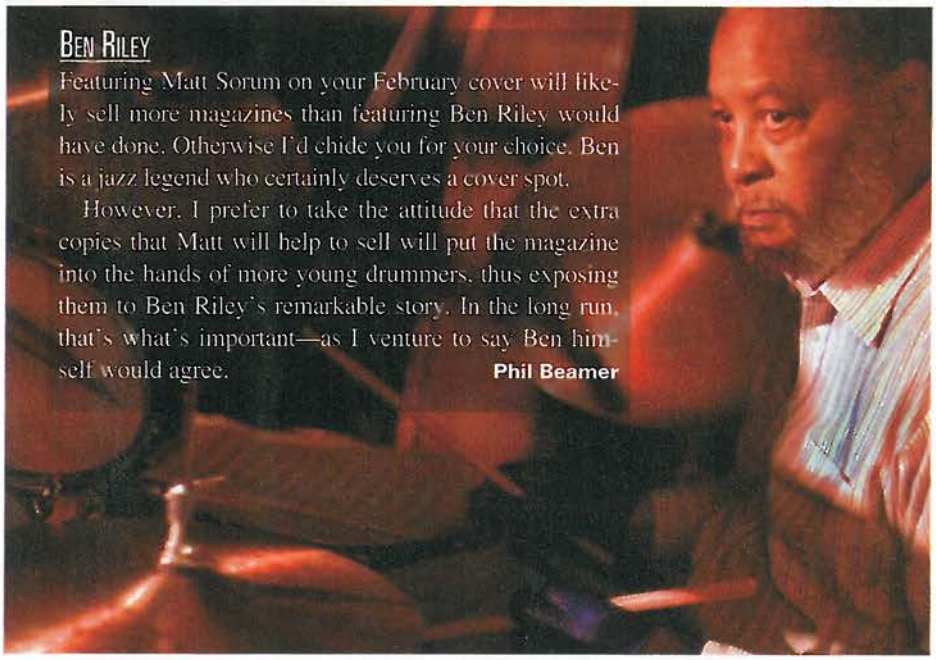


Matt Sorum

As Waleed Rashidi so accurately put it in his February interview with Matt Sorum, Matt is one of the few musicians who have been able to "span generations of rock fans." I was a huge Cult fan in the '80s, and I enjoyed Matt's work with Guns N' Roses in the '90s. My thirteen-year-old son, who is also a drummer, digs Matt's work with Velvet Revolver, and is now asking to hear my old G N' R and Cult recordings.

My son and I both enjoyed Matt's insight on drumming in general, and specifically on playing in big-name bands. He gave us a lot to learn. (So did Ed Breckenfeld's accompanying piece on Velvet Revolver drum parts.) Thanks for putting the spotlight on this talented drum star.

Frank Armenola



Ben Riley

Featuring Matt Sorum on your February cover will likely sell more magazines than featuring Ben Riley would have done. Otherwise I'd chide you for your choice. Ben is a jazz legend who certainly deserves a cover spot.

However, I prefer to take the attitude that the extra copies that Matt will help to sell will put the magazine into the hands of more young drummers, thus exposing them to Ben Riley's remarkable story. In the long run, that's what's important—as I venture to say Ben himself would agree.

Phil Beamer

February's Balance

Most people write to magazines when they have a complaint. I'm writing with a compliment. I think that the artists you featured in your February '05 issue represent the best balance of styles, generations, and outlooks I've seen in many a year. (And I've been reading *MD* for quite a while.)

Rock...classic jazz...funk...urban fusion...young...old...cutting-edge newcomer...revered studio veteran...they're all in the same issue. Talk about something for everyone!

William Arhmquist

More On MD's New Look

The new logo and type fonts are excellent! They give the magazine a modern look that really fits in with the times.

I've been an *MD* subscriber for over fifteen years, and to this day I still get a feeling of excitement when the new issue arrives in the mail. My twelve-year-old son is an up-and-coming drummer, and I just purchased him his own subscription for Christmas. I'm sure he'll get that same feeling from now on when his copies start to arrive.

Ken Shipley

Jerry Gaskill

What a pleasure to finally see a feature article on one of my favorite drummers, Jerry Gaskill. King's X is a phenomenal and totally underrated live band with a great collection of CDs. All three members are top-notch musicians, and they have some of the best vocal harmonization since The Beatles.

I saw King's X live for the first time in 1998. I was blown away by how tight they were on "We Were Born To Be Loved," with its odd time signatures and numerous stop-dead breaks. When I saw them again in 2002, I was amazed at how many backing vocals Jerry contributes while laying down those killer drum grooves. I can't wait to check out his new solo record.

Randy Omdahl

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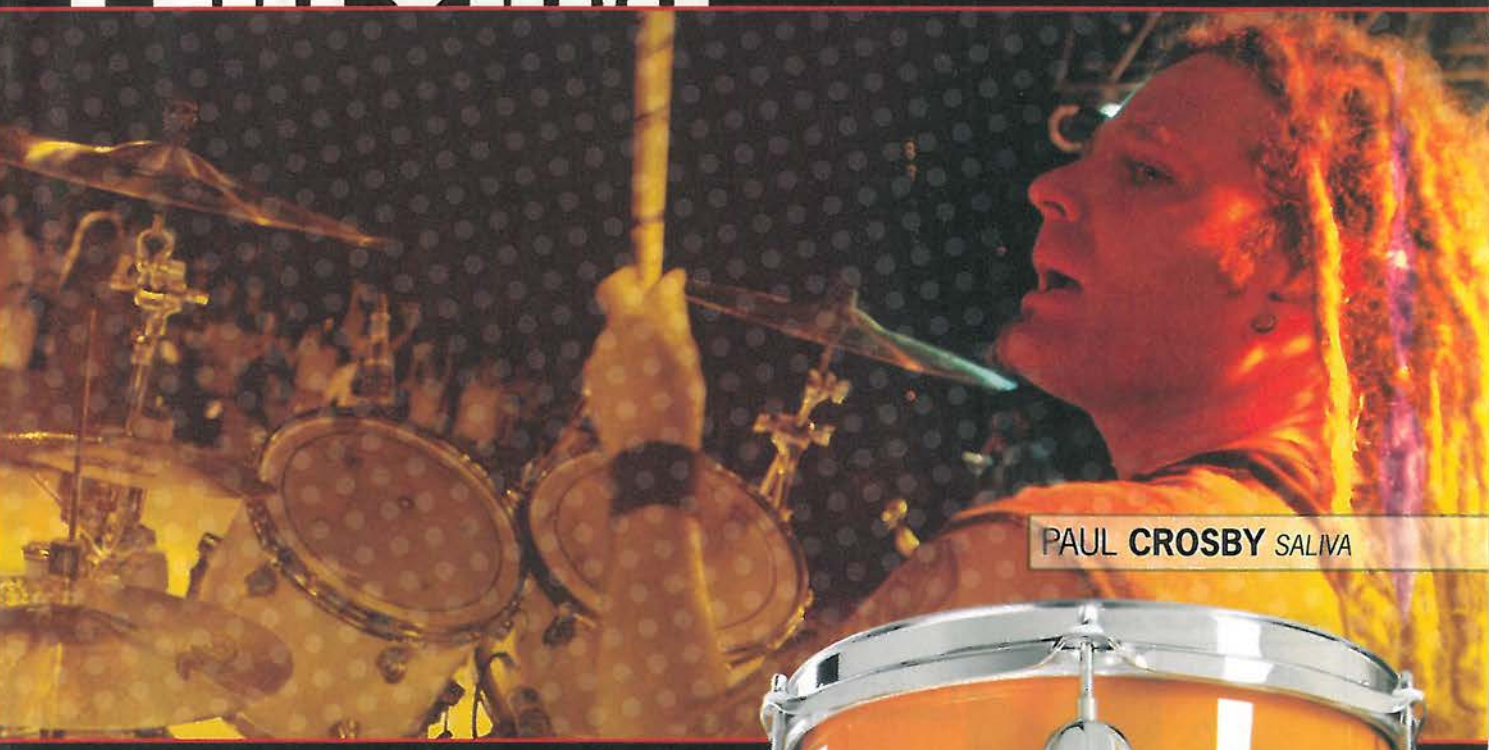

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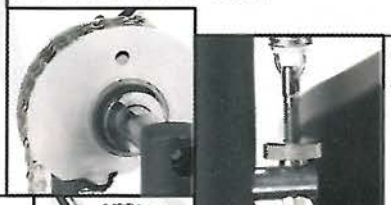

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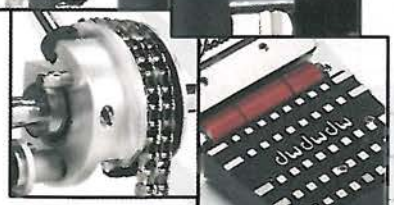

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We Aim To Please

I wanted to take time (as drummers, we have plenty) to share with you a recent positive experience I had with your publication. I've been a subscriber to *MD* for over ten years, and I joyfully received an *MD Archive* DVD as a Christmas gift. Unfortunately, I was unable to use it because my computer does not read DVDs. I was upset because I figured that I wouldn't be able to exchange it for the CD-ROM set.

I called *MD* (reluctantly, for fear of being told, "Too bad") to ask if I could exchange the product. I spoke with [*MD* vice president] Kevin Kearns, who was extremely helpful and said, "No problem." I returned the DVD on a Monday, and I received the CD-ROMs on Wednesday of the same week. Amazing!

I can't tell you how much I appreciate the level of customer service Mr. Kearns provided. The staff at *MD* are great people who not only provide terrific information to the entire drumming community as a whole, but who also take time to deal with problems of individual subscribers. Well done! **Bob Angilletta**

I played the drums as a teenager for six years. Last year, at the ripe old age of forty-seven, I decided to give it another go. So I converted our 10'x11' guest bedroom into a drum practice room. (The convenience of guests now comes after my drums.)

However, when I started playing in that small space, I quickly remembered one of the prime facts about drums: They make a heck of a lot of noise. After thirty minutes of practice, I usually ended up with throbbing ears, which was quite uncomfortable. That discomfort lasted for another forty-five minutes following each of my practice sessions. I obviously had to do something about it.

Luckily, I came upon an article in your magazine that dealt with protecting your ears by miking one's kit into a console, and listening to the resulting mix at a controlled volume through a pair of drummers' headphones. I followed this advice, adding my CD player to the console mix. My ears no longer hum, even if I play for as long as an hour.

I'm now the happiest drummer in the world, and for that I'd like to extend my sincere thanks to your staff. Please keep publishing useful tips like this, since our ears are among the most important body parts that we drummers rely on. **Denis Sauvé**

Thanks From Daniel

As the winner of the *Modern Drummer* Great Gretsch Giveaway in the July 2004 issue, I want to thank *Modern Drummer*, Gretsch, Toca Percussion, Sabian, Vic Firth, TKL, and Kaman Music for their generosity. A special thanks to Nikki at Kaman Music for her patience answering my emails.

As a drummer getting back on the skins later in life, I feel incredibly lucky to have such a kit to play. The drums, cymbals, and equipment are outstanding. Everyone who sees the kit can't believe that I won it. It definitely provides motivation to keep practicing. Thanks again! **Daniel G. Findley**

Dropped Beat

The prices shown for the Sabian Jack DeJohnette Resonating Bells in March's *Product Close-Up* were incorrect. The correct pricing is as follows:
Single bell—$82
Three-note set—$396 (w/mounting bar)
Five-note set—$660 (w/mounting bar)
Complete set—$1,425 (w/mounting bar)

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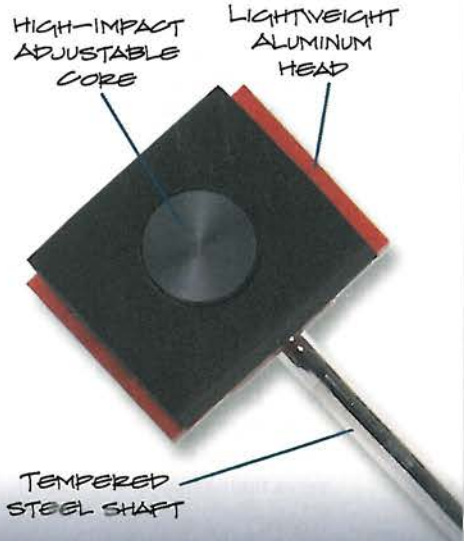

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Drumming And Singing

I've been playing the drums for a little oven ten years. I'm in the process of forming a band, and the other members want me to do some backing vocals. On the few occasions that I've tried drumming and singing at the same time, I've had difficulties. Can you give me any advice on how to prepare myself to do it?
Alex Beauregard

Your task really requires two separate approaches. The first is to become comfortable about singing in general. The second is to become comfortable at singing while playing the drums.

If you're not used to singing at all, then you should develop your voice and your singing abilities by singing along with as much music as possible, and by singing alone without music. The ability to sing is like any other skill: It needs to be developed and then practiced.

Once you feel confident about your singing (or if you're already a singer *off* of the drums), then it's a matter of combining your singing and drumming skills. Again, the best way to do this is to work with recorded music. This time, play along while you sing along. At first, focus on keeping a simple, steady beat while projecting the vocal part clearly and accurately. Little by little, you should become more confident about your singing, and you can return your attention to doing a little more on the drums. In time you'll become equally confident at both, and singing while playing will feel perfectly natural.

Eventually, you'll want to do this at band rehearsals as well. But it would be a good idea to come to those rehearsals already having done some homework using recorded music.

Ringo Garza of Los Lonely Boys (top) and Maroon 5's Ryan Dusick combine their singing and drumming skills.

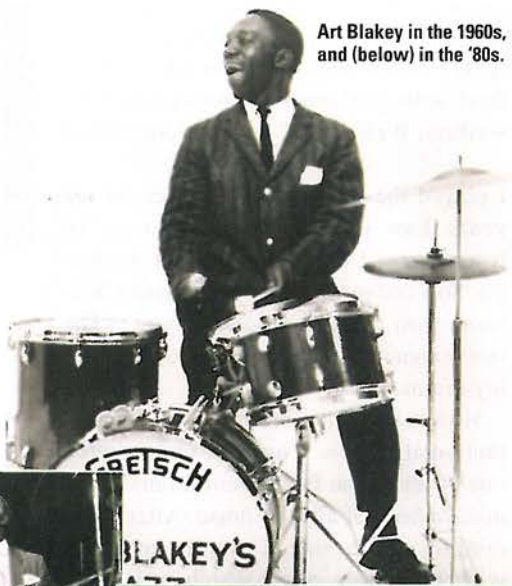
Small Jazz Kits

I've noticed that quite a few jazz drummers have only two toms: one tom on the bass drum and one floor tom. Why not more toms? And why only one tom on the bass drum?
Brian

Jazz drummers tend toward smaller kits for several reasons. One is because those were almost the only kits available from the 1930s through mid-1960s, when jazz was a more prominent part of popular music. The four-piece kit became the "standard" for jazz music more or less by default.

Also, in the 1940s and '50s, when jazz was in its heyday, most performances took place in small clubs located in big cities. Drummers often had to transport their kits by taxi or even on a subway. The smaller the kit, the easier it was to transport and fit on stage. This is also one of the reasons that 18" bass drums became popular in jazz groups.

From a musical standpoint, many jazz drummers tended to avoid flashy, "drumistic" playing, so they didn't feel the need for more complicated setups. This isn't always the case, however. For example, as rock drummers expanded their kits in the 1970s and '80s, some jazz drummers followed suit. Art Blakey's '60s-era four-piece kit evolved into an '80s setup with two and sometimes three rack toms. Jazz great Tony Williams played a four-piece kit with small drums in his early career, but eventually wound up playing a 24" bass drum, two rack toms, and three floor toms. As in any other musical style, certain artists "broke the mold" to serve their sense of expression.



Art Blakey in the 1960s, and (below) in the '80s.

Tony Williams in the early 1970s (left) and in the late '80s.

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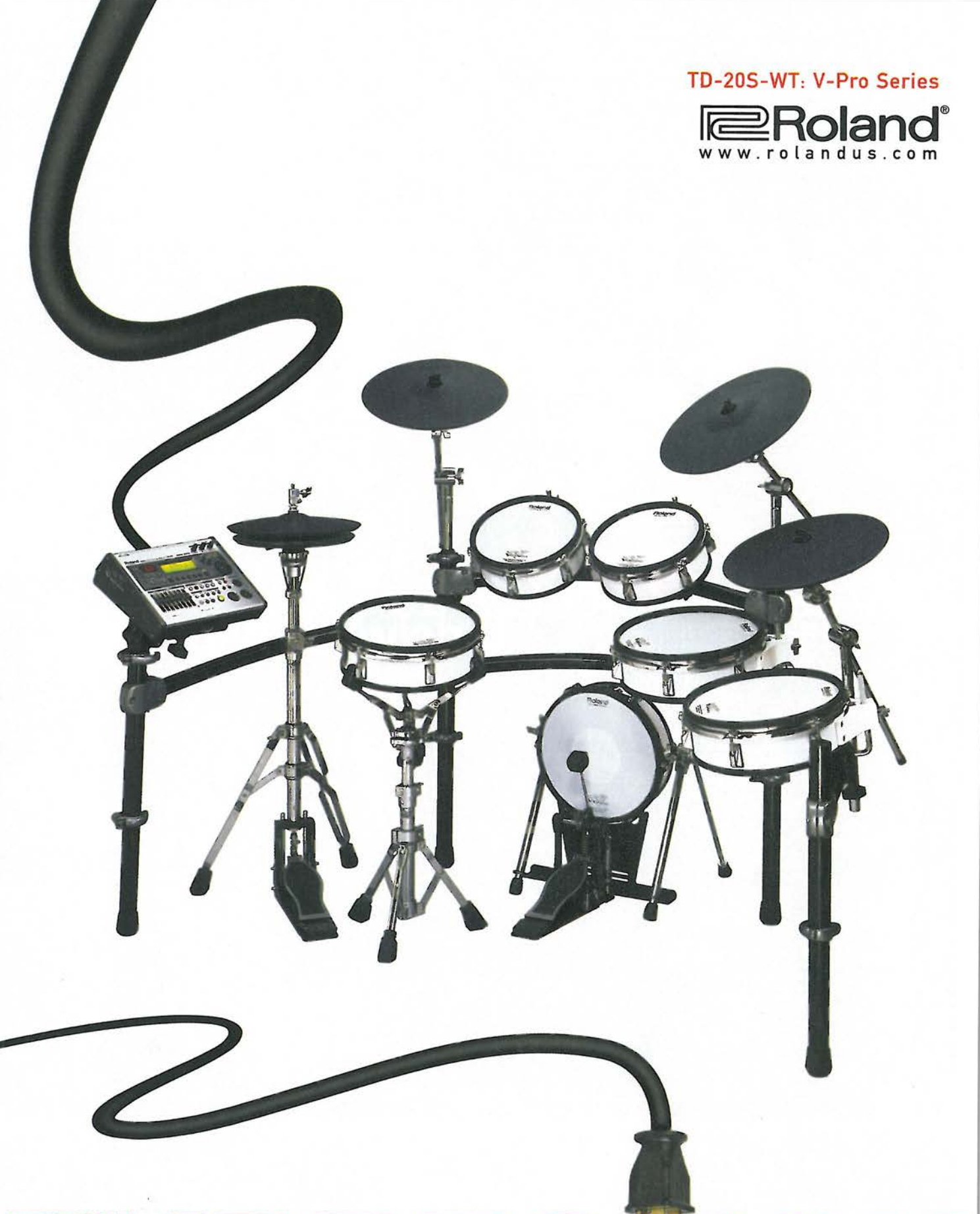
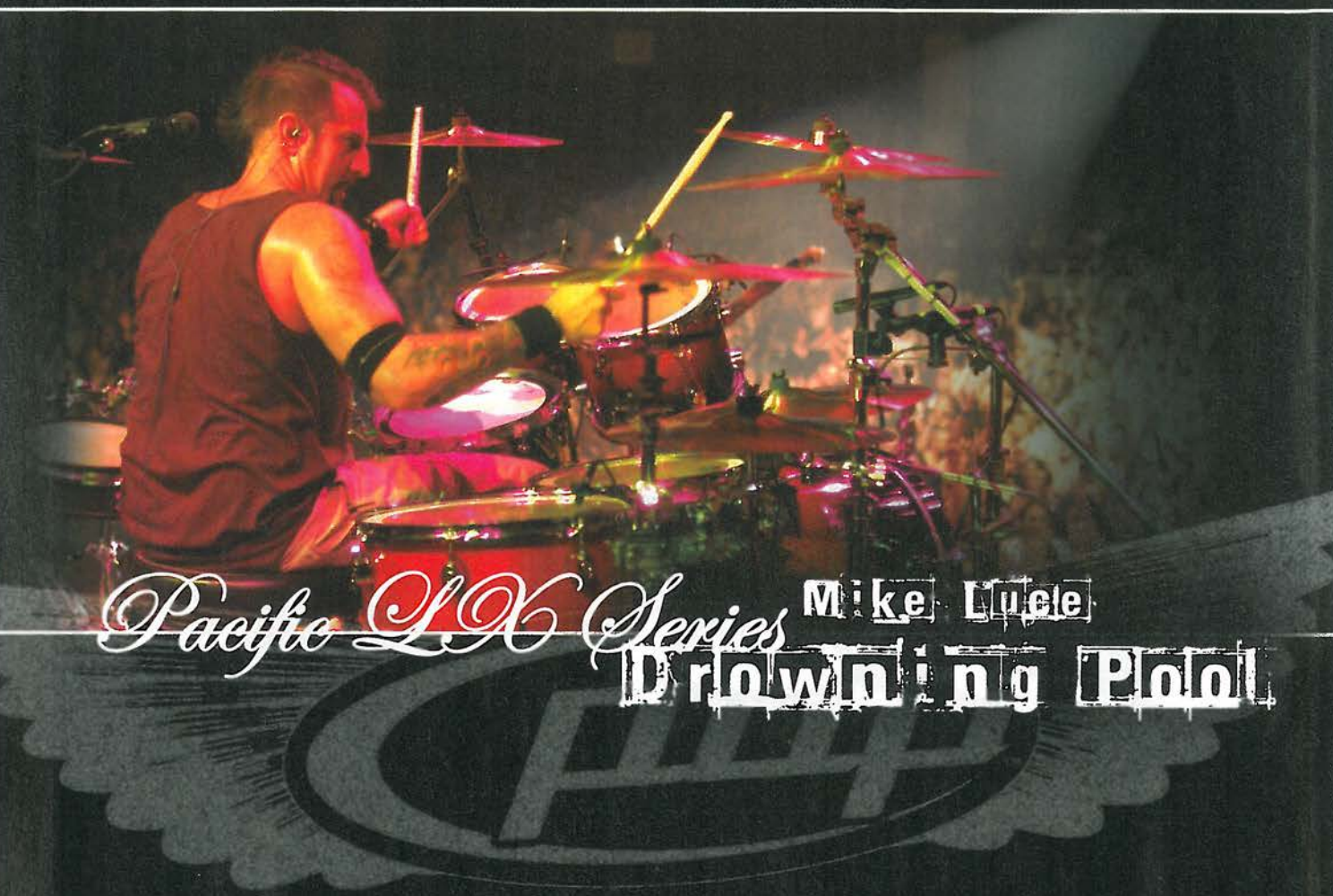


EXPRESSION



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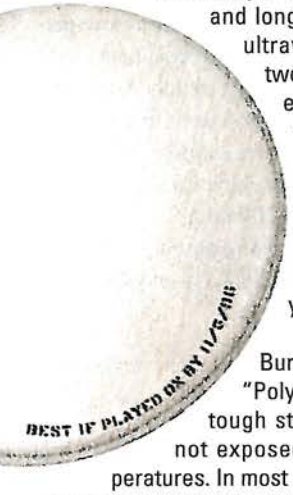
Drumhead Shelf Life

Is there a "shelf life" for drumheads mounted on drums, if the drums aren't being played? I have two snare drums that I use regularly, and others that are stored ready to use for a special situation or for recording. I'm wondering if the plastic heads on my stored drums will tend to harden over time even if they're not played. Jerry Chao

We checked with the four major drumhead manufacturers to get their response. Herbie May, director of engineering and R&D at Remo, says, "Extreme temperature and long-term exposure to ultraviolet light are the two menaces to polyester film. Assuming that your stored drums have been in bags or cases, the heads on them should be fine for many years."



Aquarian's Roy Burns concurs, saying, "Polyester film is pretty tough stuff, as long as it's not exposed to extreme temperatures. In most cases it would take years for the film to deteriorate if it is not being played on." Attack's Tom Shelley adds, "I think it depends on where the drum is stored. Is it in the garage or set up in a bedroom? Personally, I would change heads that are tensioned on a drum every two years, including tom-bottom and snare-side heads."

Evans' Mike Robinson sums up, saying, "Leaving heads in a garage or in the trunk of a car through extreme temperature variation will cause the film to shrink and expand slightly. This, in turn, causes fatigue that can alter the acoustic properties of the film over a period of time—though it's doubtful that the film will become brittle enough to break. At Evans, we recommend keeping instruments and extra heads in a temperature- and humidity-controlled environment for best long-term performance."

Questions For MD's Drum Experts?

Send them to It's Questionable, Modern Drummer, 12 Old Bridge Road, Cedar Grove, NJ 07009, or rvh@moderndrummer.com. Please include your full name with your question.

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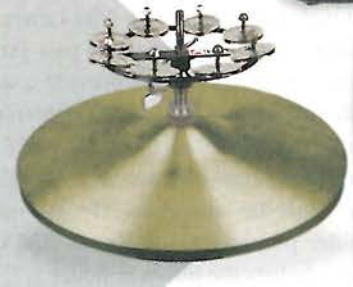
"Rhythm Tech helps me to discover new sounds both live and in the studio.

I love using the Rhythm Tech Hat Trick. It adds nuance and detail to my groove, and inspires me to find new combinations of sound elements.

Art lies in the details, so the instruments I choose are important.

Rhythm Tech always works for me."

— **Billy Ward**
(Joan Osborne)



The Rhythm Tech Hat Trick is available in a choice of Nickel or polished Brass jingles in both single and double row models. (Hi-Hat stand and cymbals not included, but you knew that, right?)

For more about Billy Ward and Rhythm Tech, log onto www.rhythmtech.com/artists/billyward

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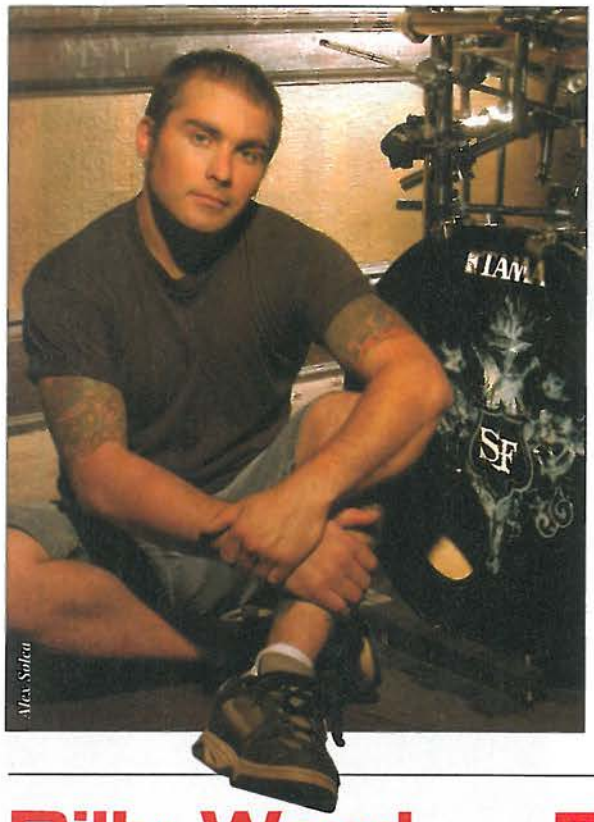

Foot Speed Tips From Jason Bittner Of Shadows Fall

Q Your foot speed is amazing. What should I practice to gain foot speed with double bass drumming?
Thomas Riley

A To begin with, foot speed is not something that comes overnight. (At least for *me* it didn't.) I've been playing double bass for a long time, and I've found that the best way to build speed and endurance is to work with a metronome. Not only does the metronome keep your time/tempo steady, it's also a great tool to help you gauge your progress.

The exercise that worked best for me involves a steady 4/4 16th-note pattern on the kicks, with an 8th- or quarter-note ride, and snare backbeats on 2 and 4. Set your metronome to a tempo at which you can play this beat comfortably (maybe 120 bpm or so), and play it non-stop for five to ten minutes. When this becomes easy, kick the metronome up 10 bpm and play for another five to ten minutes. When that becomes comfortable, kick things up again. Get the idea? Sooner or later you'll be flying along at *200* bpm.

You can also do different things over the kicks, like changing the snare pattern to 1 and 3, or just 3, or 1, 2 , 3, and 4, or just the &'s—anything that breaks the monotony and makes the exercise fun. Good luck!

Billy Ward And Russ Miller On Bass Drum Sizes

Q *MD*'s December '04 feature on bass drums prompted a question that I'd like both of you gentlemen to answer. I play classic jazz (with brushes) and contemporary jazz/funk on the same gig. I'm concerned about having an appropriate kick drum to play both styles with. I'm currently using a 16x16 kick with very little muffling. When I try to play funk material, that kick sounds too bright. Please help!
jazz4tutti

Billy Ward responds:

Many great jazz drummers have played 18" or 20" bass drums, so I think a move up in size from your 16" is an excellent idea. An 18" drum would cover the jazzy stuff, but in all honesty, you might still want more "oomph" for the funky material. So I'm inclined to recommend a 14x20 bass drum. It was good enough for Mel Lewis, Papa Jo Jones, and a host of other past jazz greats, and I'm certain it will provide a wonderful alternative to your 16". To tighten the drum up quickly for funkier tunes, stuff a rolled-up towel between the batter head and the yoke of the bass pedal. Or you might consider purchasing an Evans EMAD head, which does the job even better.

A 16x20 drum will also work, but of course it's harder to stuff into that Mini Cooper! I personally love 12x20 and 14x20 sizes, because they simply feel a little "faster" to me. The physical nature of the drum can change sound equations as well. For instance, what type of wood is it made of? Or is it wood at all? There are bass drums made out of fiberglass, aluminum, and acrylic materials these days too.

With an 18" drum, you might have to concentrate on kicking the drum harder on some funky songs because it might not be enough support for your band's bottom end. With a 20" drum, you might need to learn to play with a softer, more feathery touch on those jazz tunes. Personally, I think a better touch is a *good* thing to acquire, so I vote for the 14x20. Good luck!

Russ Miller responds:

Getting a kick to have the punch necessary for contemporary styles *and* the tone and sustain required for swing playing is very difficult. The muffling and head combinations for the two styles oppose one another.

My standard kick for recording is a 16x24. However, when I work live with

Bobby Caldwell's big band, I use a 16x20 Yamaha Maple Custom kick with Remo FiberSkyn 3 PowerStroke 3 heads front and back, and no internal muffling. Bobby's show runs from light ballads to screaming big band charts to Bobby's R&B hits. The 20" kick has the drive and punch for a funk groove, yet when left unmuffled, it also has a nice tone and sustain for swing playing.

I never use large holes in the front head. Instead, I have ⅛" holes drilled at each tension rod around the diameter of the resonant side. Not using a large hole helps with the sustain and also retains more of the fundamental low frequency of the drum.

Another key for me is beater technique. I usually don't leave the beater on the head. I only "dig in" occasionally, for stylistic considerations. Pulling the sound from the drum in this way helps to create more tone from the impact and retain the sustain. I hope this helps!

Repeat Bar

A Classic Quote From MD's Past

"I've gotten compliments on my touch...on playing sensitively. I like when I do something loud for it to be a surprise. In order for there to be loud, there has to be soft."

The Heath Brothers' **Albert "Tootie" Heath**
June 1998

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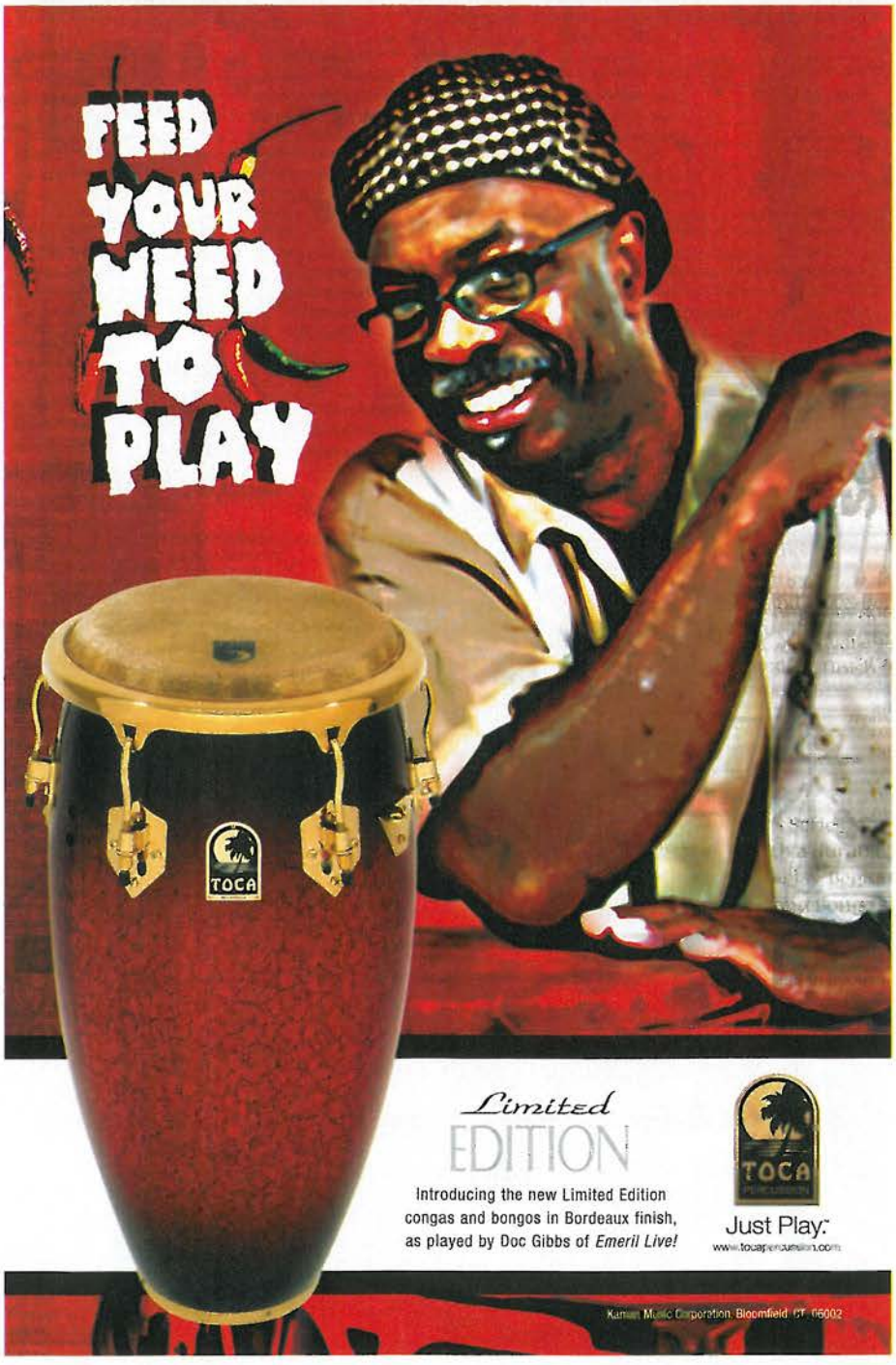

Starclassic Performer

Jeremy Colson

On Control, Punch, and a Punk Perspective in Instrumental Rock

Yes, Jeremy Colson does play with Steve Vai, one of the biggest names in the history of instrumental rock. But, no, he doesn't play with one of the big kits historically associated with instrumental rock. "The styles of music that have influenced me the most—metal and punk—are where you go more for a 4pc kit," explains Jeremy. "If I had a 30pc kit I'd want to hit every drum. That would take away from the foundation of what my job is: keep the groove solid so the other guys can do their solos and know where 'the one' is. If everyone in the band is going off playing a lot of notes, it's hard for the audience to move to the music."

But there are times when Jeremy does have to play a lot of notes. Continues Colson: "On certain technical sections of Vai songs, I have to follow his notes on the toms so I need drums with control. The birch shells have punch AND control. That control is also important for the bigger drum sizes I prefer. Big drums usually need muffling or super thick heads. That takes away from your sound. But with the Performers, I don't need to do that—the drums sound great live or in the studio. They're really easy to tune and they stay in tune. My 18 x 24 is literally the best sounding kick in the world and birch snare has as much crack as a metal drum, but with more control and tone. The drums are just awesome."

Starclassic Performer 100% birch drums are now available in the new 4pc kit configuration featuring a thunderous 18 x 24" bass drum, as well as by individual order in over 26 different sizes.

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- 18 x 24" bass drum without tom holder mount
- 9 x 12" tom tom
- 16 x 16" floor tom
- 6.5 x 14" snare drum

Starclassic Performer painted drums are now available in 11 super high gloss finishes including the new Red Sparkle Fade and Blue Galaxy Fade finishes.

Hear Jermey Olson and his Starclassic Performer drums on the upcoming release from Steve Vai, *Real Illusions: Reflections*. Instores February 22, 2005.

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CHEVELLE'S
Sam Loeffler
Thinking Of Success

"We went out with friends, went to the beach, and saw a couple of bands like The Mars Volta. We really tried to get out and do some things." That's Chevelle drummer Sam Loeffler *not* describing a recent vacation, but rather his recording experience with his brothers Pete and Joe in Los Angeles for *This Type Of Thinking (Could Do Us In)*, the follow-up to the trio's platinum-selling *Wonder What's Next*.

"Making this record was a lot of fun," Sam admits, "because Pete and I lived in the Renaissance Hotel on Hollywood and Highland for five weeks. That was one of the things we splurged on, because we really wanted to live in that hotel. We'd go to the studio to record and then go back to the hotel. We did that every day, and it really felt like we were on vacation."

The aforementioned recording experience was about the closest thing to a vacation Loeffler and his bandmate brothers had received since the release of 2002's *Wonder What's Next*. Immediately after the album hit store shelves, Loeffler began a relentless touring schedule that didn't terminate until the tail end of 2003. But instead of rewarding themselves with some well-deserved time off from their music, the act sprung immediately into action, a mere two weeks after their tour ended.

"We went in right away and started writing," Loeffler recalls. "When we finished up with the tour, we didn't have one song for this new record. So we basically wrote, recorded, and got the record out in about eight weeks."

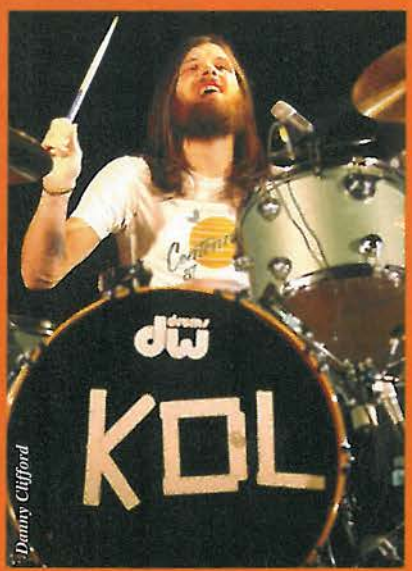
Produced by Michael "Elvis" Baskette and the band, Loeffler's drum tracking sessions at Sunset Sound in Los Angeles were, according to the drummer, "really, really smooth. I had worked out a lot of parts. And whatever parts I didn't necessarily love the fills for, I was able to work out in the studio and keep playing until I found something I really liked."

Loeffler tracked *Thinking* with a new Pearl Masterworks kit, and eventually fell in love with the drums enough to order an identical set for use outside the studio. Out of an arsenal of ten snare drums, Sam also grew fond of a Pearl UltraCast aluminum snare drum. "It's pretty badass live," he says. "It's got this crazy 'crack' to it, which is cool."

With another number-1 single ("Vitamin R") on the charts, Loeffler's tireless, ever-expanding musical crusade has received greater attention with his most recent work. "We wanted to make a melodic, heavy, head-bobbing kind of record," the drummer notes. "One of the ways we wanted to do that was with syncopated double bass rhythms. I think that makes this record really different, and it's cool that people notice that."

Waleed Rashidi

KINGS OF LEON'S
Nathan Followill
Dealing With Heartbreak



Dantry Clifford

You could argue that Nathan Followill's life hasn't changed much from when he was a kid. He's still constantly surrounded by family, lives on the road, and gets to play drums. Is there a difference between drumming for Kings Of Leon and touring the country as the son of a Pentecostal evangelist?

"It's pretty similar in that you go into town, set up, do what you do, and get the hell out," says Followill, who is joined by brothers Caleb and Jared and his first cousin Matthew in the Southern-rock inspired Tennessee band. "You're going for a different goal, but they are eerily similar."

Like many artists, church is where Followill was exposed to music—secular rock 'n' roll wasn't allowed. Still, it didn't take long for him to turn to the drums, and by age seven he began listening to "a bunch of nameless, faceless guys" he heard play in churches as his family toured the Bible Belt.

"The majority of my style comes from the church," Followill admits. "It was the only style of music I really played from the age of seven through eighteen or nineteen. That's a big influence in my playing."

Returning to the studio to record the follow-up to 2003's UK success, *Youth And Young Manhood*, Followill said making *Aha Shake Heartbreak* was almost like recording a rehearsal. "The first record was live, but not nearly as live as this one," he says. "Listen carefully and you can hear guitar bleed through the kick mic."

Followill said improving his drumming from *Manhood* to *Heartbreak* was hard to avoid, something he puts down to the constant touring. "Subconsciously I had to get better," he says. "You do something two hundred times in a year and a half, and you've *got* to get better. Playing so many shows and trying new things, I got more comfortable behind the kit."

As Kings Of Leon eye another North American run, Followill says US audiences are beginning to warm to their sound—something the Brits did almost instantly. "Touring in America now feels like the first time we toured the UK. It's getting better and better."

Chris Kornelis

The Stray Cats'

Slim Jim Phantom

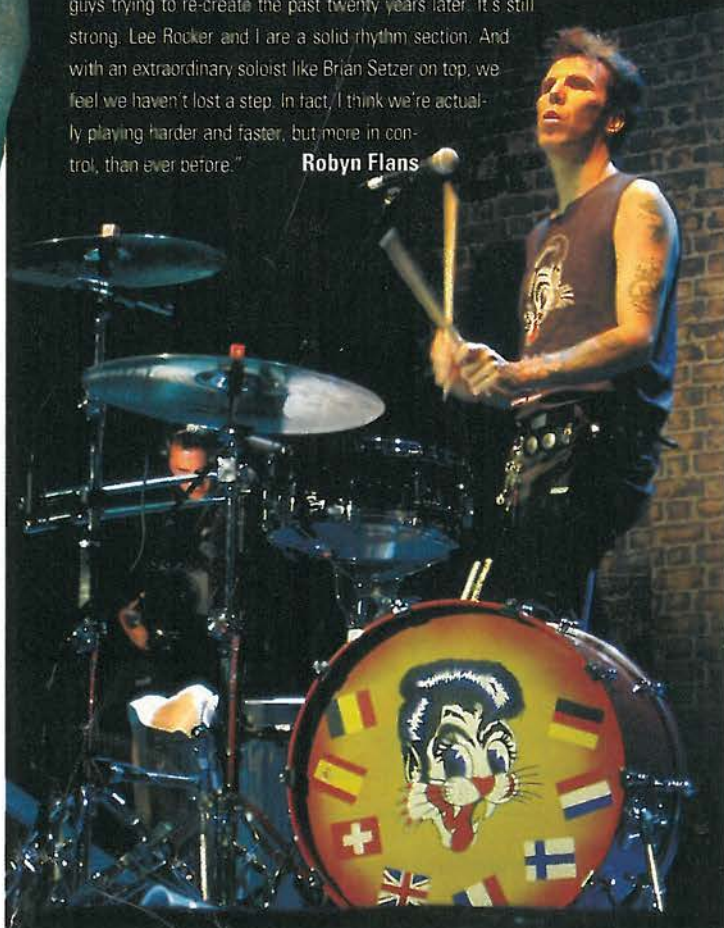
Harder And Faster Than Ever

After ten years apart, The Stray Cats are back together again—and receiving a big response in the process. During the 4th of July weekend in 2003, the trio played to a crowd of 10,000. "It was all kids who discovered this music since we started," says drummer Slim Jim Phantom. "In the same way that we got turned on to this music by digging deeper through the Rolling Stones and the Beatles, finding Buddy Holly and Carl Perkins, these kids have found those guys through *us*. There was no rehearsal or set list for that gig. We just turned up to play for two hours in one-hundred-degree weather, and it was great."

The band figured that, since the show went so well, they'd see where it could go. Old friends since grade school, Slim Jim says they wanted to play together sooner, but were busy doing their own projects, such as Slim Jim's record with Motorhead's Lemmy, *Lemmy And Slim Jim*, as well as a live DVD filmed at Slim Jim's own club, The Cat Club. But last summer, The Stray Cats managed to go to Europe and play to sold-out crowds. "We were playing to between 5,000 and 10,000 kids every night," Slim Jim says. "And they *live* the lifestyle over there. It was amazing to go to Helsinki and see 2,000 old American cars!"

The group made a movie about that tour, which has just been released. *Rumble In Brixton* features footage from the tour, an entire London concert, and a new song they recently recorded. So it seems the Cats will be back for a while. "What I love about it is it's been twenty years since we made the first record, but we haven't slowed down," Phantom insists. "It doesn't sound like guys trying to re-create the past twenty years later. It's still strong. Lee Rocker and I are a solid rhythm section. And with an extraordinary soloist like Brian Setzer on top, we feel we haven't lost a step. In fact, I think we're actually playing harder and faster, but more in control, than ever before."

Robyn Flans



Gary U.S. Bonds'

Lance Hyland Stark

Hot Prospects

Years ago, the first drummer featured in *Modern Drummer*'s *On The Move* column was New Jersey–based player Lance Hyland Stark. It seems the editors of the magazine felt that Stark was an up and comer with a bright future. At this point it's safe to say that he is no longer up and coming, but has fully arrived. These days Stark can be heard on the new release from Gary U.S. Bonds, *Back In 20*, which includes guest appearances from the likes of Bruce Springsteen, Phoebe Snow, Southside Johnny, and Dickey Betts.

"It's incredible!" Stark exclaims. "I mean who wouldn't go nuts with even the thought of recording a song with just one of those artists, never mind with all of them. These are some of the greatest influences and performers of blues, R&B, and rock 'n' roll, and I certainly include Gary U.S. Bonds in that mix."

Lance also recently filled in for '70s rockers Starz at a festival in Texas. "I was psyched to work with such a classic hard rock act, and I didn't hesitate to say yes to their invitation," he says. "Starz is a class act, and I expect to be working with the band again in the future, if and when they need me."

Besides his frequent performances, Lance keeps busy working with new artists. "I've been working with and producing a few singer/songwriters," he says. "One is Jimmy Maraventano of Jimmy & The Parrots. They're a fun band with Jimmy Buffett–type songs. Another is Brian Mackey, a talented local Jersey artist. And another is Lisa Bouchelle, an unbelievable songwriter with great vocals and a gift for the studio. I'm touring a lot with Gary, so there's not much time for these projects, but I do what I can. I'm always working. I think I had three days off all of last summer!"

To all those young drummers out there, Lance has some simple words of encouragement. "Have fun with this stuff," he says. "Just beat the drums as often as you can, and listen to everything. It's all percussion and rhythms, whether it's Gene Krupa, Godsmack, or Anton Fig on *David Letterman*. There's always something to learn from each artist."

For further information on what Lance is up to, check out his Web page at http://members.aol.com/drumsaway/Lance.html. **Hal B. Selzer**

Jazz-Fusion Veteran

Alphonse Mouzon

Boom-Bop From A Master

Even though Alphonse Mouzon is best known for being a charter member of Weather Report, for his amazing work with Larry Coryell's Eleventh House, and as a funk-fusion pioneer, his musical associations read like a veritable who's who of rock. Over the last twenty-plus years Alphonse has worked with Carlos Santana, Jeff Beck, Eric Clapton, Stevie Wonder, and the late Tommy Bolin.

"Even though I've played a lot of jazz throughout my career, I do also like to rock," Mouzon admits. "I used to hang out with a lot of rock musicians." And it appears that no less a drumming legend than John Bonham liked the way Mouzon rocked too, because when Led Zeppelin was inducted into the Rock And Roll Hall Of Fame in 1995, Robert Plant named Alphonse Mouzon as one of the group's major influences. "Bonzo said he listened to my drumming every day," Alphonse says proudly. "He was a big fan of my playing."

Lately, Alphonse has been very busy as a performer and producer for several upcoming releases on his Tenacious Records, a label that sports thirteen of Alphonse's recordings as a leader, most of which are straight-ahead jazz. In the next few months, however, he plans on releasing three new recordings. One of those, *The Alphonse Mouzon Funky Swinging Organ Trio*, promises to be a standout. The trio features Joe Bagg on organ and Alphonse's longtime colleague Jeff Berlin on bass. "This trio is really outstanding," the drummer states. "Jeff Berlin is a great bassist, and I have a very talented organist in Joe Bagg. But it's the drummer that makes it swing!"

In addition to touring and running his record label, Alphonse is very active these days as a private teacher. "I love teaching and seeing the response I get," he admits. "To see kids learn and grow to become masters is very satisfying. I teach my students to play *and* read, dig into various styles—not just rock, but jazz and funk too. I teach my patterns, and I have students vocalize a lot of the material."

Alphonse is currently working on a method book that will contain grooves and fills appropriate for beginners to advanced players. It will also include accompanying vocalizations for all of the grooves and fills. "It's like being a rapper: 'boom, bop, ba boom boom, bop.' I taught my kids to play this way years ago, and it really works." **Stephen Flinn**

DRUM DATES This month's important events in drumming history

Zutty Singleton was born on 5/14/1898.
Mel Lewis was born on 5/10/29.
John Bonham was born on 5/31/48.

Billy Higgins passed away on 5/4/01.
Elvin Jones passed away on 5/18/04.

On 5/21/71, Paul McCartney (with **Denny Seiwell** on drums) releases his second solo record, *Ram*.

On 5/16/87, **Art Blakey** receives the honorary degree of Doctor Of Music from Berklee College Of Music.

In what will be his last recording, **Elvin Jones** enters the studio on 5/12/02 with his brother Hank on piano and Richard Davis on bass to begin recording The Great Jazz Trio's *Someday My Prince Will Come*.

Happy Birthday!

Freddie Gruber (educator): 5/27/27

Levon Helm (The Band): 5/26/42

Billy Cobham (drumming legend): 5/16/44

Bill Kreutzmann (The Grateful Dead): 5/7/46

Butch Trucks (The Allman Brothers): 5/11/47

Bill Ward (Black Sabbath): 5/5/48

Bill Bruford (Yes, Earthworks): 5/17/48

Paulinho Da Costa (percussion great): 5/31/48

Prairie Prince (The Tubes): 5/7/50

Mike Balter (mallet maker): 5/7/52

Sly Dunbar (reggae master): 5/10/52

Alex Van Halen (Van Halen): 5/8/53

Mark Herndon (Alabama): 5/11/55

Stan Lynch (Tom Petty): 5/21/55

Mel Gaynor (Simple Minds): 5/29/59

Dave Abbruzzese (Pearl Jam): 5/17/64

Charley Drayton (sessions): 5/9/65

Sean Kinney (Alice In Chains): 5/27/66

Alan White (Oasis): 5/26/72

Nick Tosco (Justincase): 5/1/85

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NEWS

Having recently finished Phil Collins' farewell tour, percussionist **Luis Conte** can be heard on new CDs by Ozzy Osbourne and Shakira, as well as on such film soundtracks as *Ocean's 12* and *Sideways*. He's also been playing out with his own band, with **Tom Brechtlein** on drums. (Tom has been playing dates with Chick Corea recently as well.)

Shannon Larkin is in the studio with Godsmack, doing pre-production for their new CD.

Andres Karu is on The Wonder Stuff's latest release, *Escape From Rubbish Island*.

Josh Freese will be touring with Sting on his upcoming tour. Phantom Planet, with **Jeff Conrad** on drums, will be opening.

Steve Distanislao (a.k.a. **Stevie D**) had a very busy 2004 touring with David Crosby & CPR and then joining Chris Robinson and his new band The New Earth Mud during the summer and fall. Spring of 2005 finds him touring with David Crosby & Graham Nash.

Neal Schon's *I On U* features **Omar Hakim** on drums.

Kevin Winard is on recent projects by Ray Brown Jr., as well as playing drums and percussion on CDs by Shawn Thies and Rebecca Kleinmann. Kevin has also been on the road a lot with Doc Severinsen, as well as doing some scattered dates with Kenny Loggins and Sergio Mendes.

Paul Campanella is on Tommy Z's debut album, *Universal Love*.

Glen Sobel has been busy in the studio. He can be heard on the new Jeff Scott Soto CD *Lost In The Translation*, and the recently released *The Best Of Gary Hoey*, which also has tracks featuring **Gregg Bissonette**, **Frankie Banali**, and **Bobby Rock**. Glen is also back teaching at PIT.

Ray Luzier can be heard on the new Hideous Sun Demons CD, Billy Sheehan's *Cosmic Troubadour*, David Lee Roth's *Diamond Dave*, and the new Goaded CD. Lately he's been touring with David Lee Roth, and this summer he has an instructional DVD coming out from Hal Leonard.

Spencer Peterson is on Hidden In Plain View's full-length debut, *Life In Dreaming*.

Sergio Bellotti was recently on the road with Dan Siegel.

William Ellis is on Blue Merle's *Burning In The Sun*.

Jon Coghill is on Powderfinger's latest, *Vulture Street*.

Greg Morrow is on Jessi Alexander's debut, *Honeysuckle Sweet*.

Travis McNabb is on Better Than Ezra's new CD, *Before The Robots*.

MD Radio — To hear some of the artists mentioned in this month's *Update*, go to MD Radio at www.moderndrummer.com.

Paul Allen is doing live dates with R&B singer Ricky Fante and actor/singer Tyler Hilton.

Tony Adams cut tracks with producer Russ Titelman for singer-songwriter Jared Tyler's CD. Tony's also been playing dates with blues guitarist Bill Sims.

Adam Richman is a one-man band on his latest *Patience And Science*. Along with playing the drums on the CD, Adam recorded all of the instruments himself.

Mark Gajadhar is on The Blood Brothers' new CD, *Crimes*.

Felix Pollard was recently on tour with Clay Aiken.

Dafnis Prieto has released a solo CD, *About The Monks*.

Aaron Montgomery is in the studio with Trapt, working on their new CD.

Virgil Donati has joined Soul SirkUS. The band will be touring to support their debut, *World Play*.

Igor Cavalera and Sepultura donated items auctioned via eBay with proceeds to be donated to Doctors Without Borders and the Red Cross for their tsunami relief efforts.

Sean Rickman will be touring Europe with Screaming Headless Torsos.

Stephen Chopek has just wrapped up Jess Malin's tour in support of his CD *The Heat*.

Dave Buckner is on tour with Papa Roach.

Chad Taylor is on Sam Prekop's latest, *Who's Your New Professor?*

Butchy Fuego is on Pit er Pat's *Shakey*.

Eric Allen is on Wallace Roney's latest, *Prototype*.

The **Terry Hanson** Ensemble has their first disc out, *Jazzed*.

Joe McChan is on the new EP by Vaux, *Plague Music*.

Jeff Facci is on the new one by Full Blown Chaos, *Wake The Demons*. The band recently did tours with Walls Of Jericho and Hatebreed.

Joe Barlord is on Usurper's *Cryptobeast*.

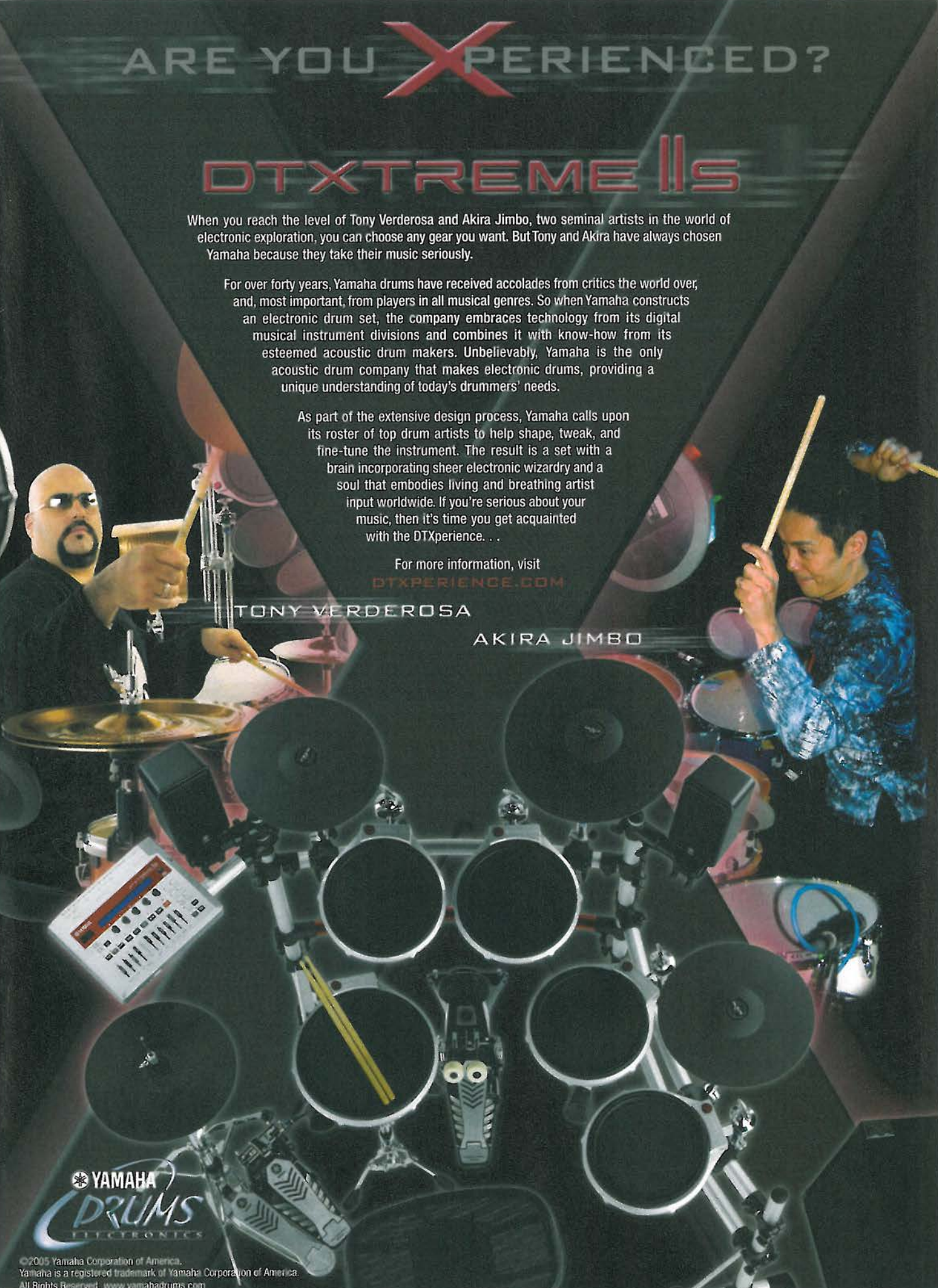
Aqualis Priester is on Angra's *Temple Of Shadows*.

Lumar LeBlanc (snare drum), **Derrick J. Moss** (bass drum), and legendary percussionist **Bill Summers** are on The Soul Rebels' *Rebelution*.

Scotty Irving is on the new CD by Americana singer-songwriter Jonny Colley, *All With Love*, as well as the new Benjomatic album, *New Tales For The Broken Radio*.

Matt Wilson is on *Crossed Paths* by The Fred Hess Quartet.

And finally, congratulations to **Joe Bergamini** (Happy The Man) and his wife Kim on the birth of their daughter Jennarose Christine.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Pearl Limited Edition Masters Mahogany Classic Drumkit

When Old Meets New

HITS

authentic vintage sound potential

outstanding construction quality

historic look

MISSES

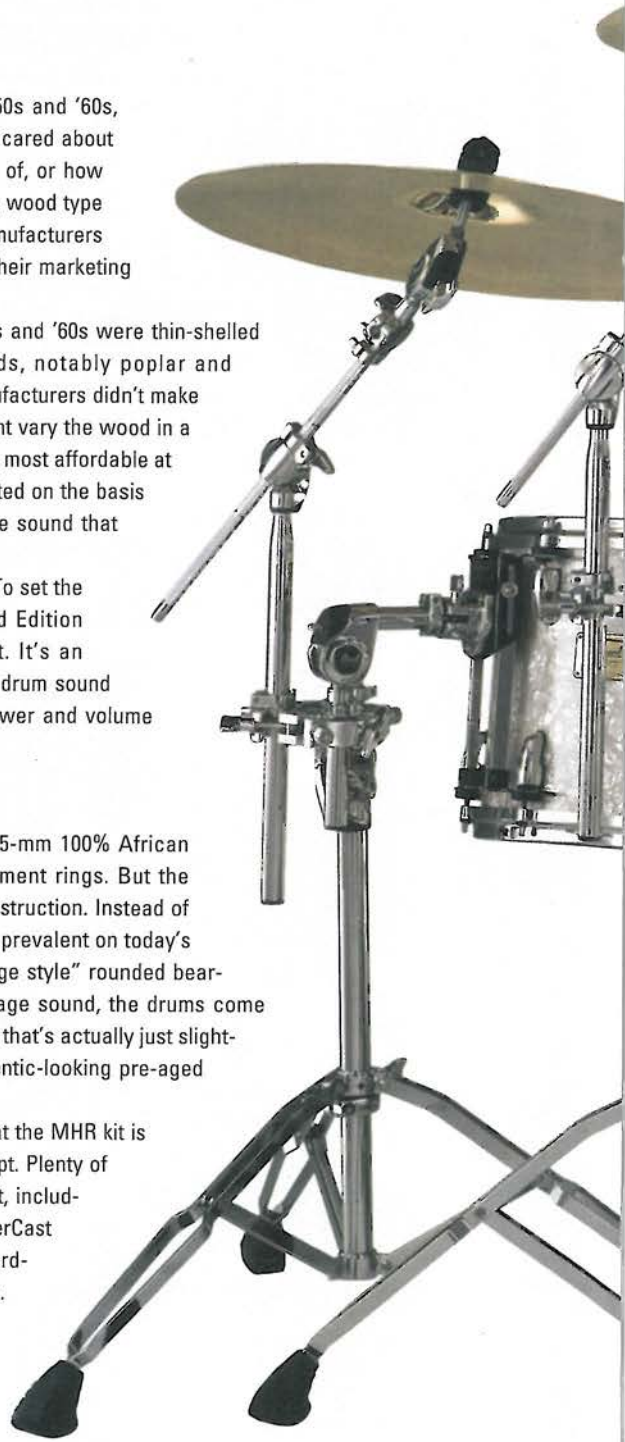
head selection seems inappropriate

by Rick Van Horn

There was a time, back in the 1950s and '60s, when drummers neither knew nor cared about what wood their drumshells were made of, or how many plies they featured. Obsession with wood type and shell thickness came later, when manufacturers started using those design elements in their marketing campaigns.

As it happens, most drums in the '50s and '60s were thin-shelled models made from a variety of woods, notably poplar and mahogany. Many were blends. The manufacturers didn't make an issue of wood type because they might vary the wood in a given production run, based on what was most affordable at the time. Instead, the drums were promoted on the basis of the manufacturer's reputation and the sound that the drums ultimately produced.

Why the long-winded history lesson? To set the stage for our review of Pearl's Limited Edition Masters Mahogany Classic (MHR) kit. It's an unabashed throwback to the drums and drum sound that dominated the era before sheer power and volume became "priority one."



What They Are

The MHR drums feature thin, 4-ply, 5-mm 100% African mahogany shells with maple reinforcement rings. But the shells aren't the only nod to historic construction. Instead of the sharp, 45° bearing edges that are so prevalent on today's drums, the MHR drums are given "vintage style" rounded bearing edges. And to complement the vintage sound, the drums come with a Vintage White Marine Pearl finish that's actually just slightly off-white, lending the drums an authentic-looking pre-aged appearance.

Ah, but don't be fooled into thinking that the MHR kit is only about a "dated" construction concept. Plenty of state-of-the-art features are also present, including Pearl's Optimount tom holders, MasterCast die-cast hoops, triple chrome-plated hardware, and stainless-steel tension rods. And as might be expected from Pearl's top-of-the-line series, all construction elements on our review kit (bearing edges, shell finish, fit, and assembly) were flawless.

The MHR is sold as a four-piece

Pearl
Masters

shell pack that includes an 18x22 bass drum, and 8x10, 9x12, and 11x14 suspended toms. Additional components available include a 7x8 suspended tom and 5½x14 snare drum (which we had for review) and a 16x16 floor tom (which we didn't have). The snare features the same mahogany shell with maple reinforcement rings as the other drums.

Because the MHR kit is sold as a shell pack, no hardware is included. Pearl figures that players who buy this kit will probably already have a collection of hardware, so not including any will save the customer from buying duplicate items. Obviously, owing to the Optimount tom holders, one would need Pearl (or similar) tom arms.

Our review kit was sent with Pearl's new 2000 series tom, cymbal, snare, and hi-hat stands. Chap Ostrander gave the BC-2000 boom cymbal stand a glowing review in the August '04 *MD*. I will simply say that these stands are big and strong—and heavy—and they provide just about the most versatile positioning options I've ever encountered.

The white marine pearl finish gives the MHR kit a "vintage" look, while the Optimount tom holders are state-of-the-art.

Not Quite There

In addition to their function of adding strength to the thin mahogany shells on the MHR drums, the maple reinforcing rings also help promote the initial attack sound. This sound is then expanded and resonated by the thin shells. Meanwhile, the rounded bearing edges are designed to conform to the collar of a drumhead and make more contact with the head itself (as opposed to the way a head barely touches a sharply cut bearing edge). This results in a "warmer" drum sound than one would expect from more contemporary-style edges. So the MHR drums are all ready to produce the rich, mellow sound that was so prevalent among drums of the '50s and '60s.

However, our review kit came with one impediment to that goal. It was fitted with clear Remo Ambassador heads on the toms, a coated Ambassador on the snare, and two clear PowerStroke 3 bass drum heads. These are all fine heads, but they're pretty much the antithesis of the heads used on the drums up until the early '60s, which were predominantly calfskin. It seemed strange to us to go to the trouble of recreating the shells and bearing edges of one era, only to fit the drums with heads specifically designed to create sounds from another.

Now, it may be that Pearl wanted to hedge their bets a little bit with the sound of the MHR kit and not go *too* far into the past. This would also be indicated by the sizes of the bass drum and toms we were sent (which are anything but vintage) and the fact that the toms were all suspension mounted. But when we played the kit with the original heads, the sound we got was a sort of hybrid—neither vintage nor modern. My colleague Bill Miller said the sound made him want to play Billy Cobham licks from the fusion era. My wife—who's been listening to me play drums for more than thirty years—simply said, "Those sound like the drums you used to play," meaning my '70s-era kits with plastic heads.

Really There

When I first saw the press release about the MHR kit, I speculated that with all its "vintage" design features, the kit might best be served by equipping it with calf-like heads. After hearing the kit with its factory-installed heads, I was even more eager to try out my theory. So I contacted Remo for a complete set of FiberSkyn 3 heads. I fitted the toms with FA (Ambassador-weight) batters and FD (Diplomat weight) bottom heads. The snare got an FA batter, and the bass drum got a FiberSkyn 3 PowerStroke 3 batter and a regular FA front head.

Oh *baby*! There was the warmth, the mellowness, the richness...in short, the authenticity. This head selection seemed a match made in heaven for the design characteristics of the MHR drums. I grant you that this "vintage" sound might be considered one-dimensional, but what a dimension that is. Overall, I deemed the kit's sound as being "fatter than a pregnant whale."

The bass drum (with nothing in it and no hole in the front head) was big yet controlled, with a very satisfying *whump*. The toms resonated beautifully, with a deep, earthy sound. (How I longed for that optional 16x16 floor tom!) And while the snare drum didn't have a penetrating crack, it did have a richness and a character that was absolutely consistent with the rest of the kit. The die-cast hoops gave rimshots a nice, fat quality, and the drum's resonance made for some wonderful N'awlins second-line patterns. Snare sensitivity was also excellent for brushwork.

Conclusion

While I can respect the sound of the MHR kit with its original heads, I truly believe that its acoustic nature is best served by the use of calf-like heads such as FiberSkyns. I earnestly encourage Pearl to offer the kit with that head selection. Again, I'll stipulate that the sound isn't for everybody, because not everybody seeks a vintage character in their drumming. But if you *do*, and you'd like to get that character along with absolutely state-of-the-art construction quality (which you often *don't* get with "genuine" vintage drums from bygone days), then these are the drums for you. But you'd better hurry, because this configuration is a limited edition. If I were you, I'd get in line!

THE NUMBERS

Note: Our review kit included the following:

Four-piece shell pack (18x22 bass drum, 8x10, 9x12, and 11x14 suspended toms)	$3,799
Optional 5½x14 snare	$ 595
Optional 7x8 tom	$ 680
Two TC-2000 tom/cymbal stands @ $279 each	$ 558
T2000 double tom stand	$ 239
H2000 Eliminator hi-hat stand	$ 299
S2000 snare stand	$ 199
Total list price	$6,532

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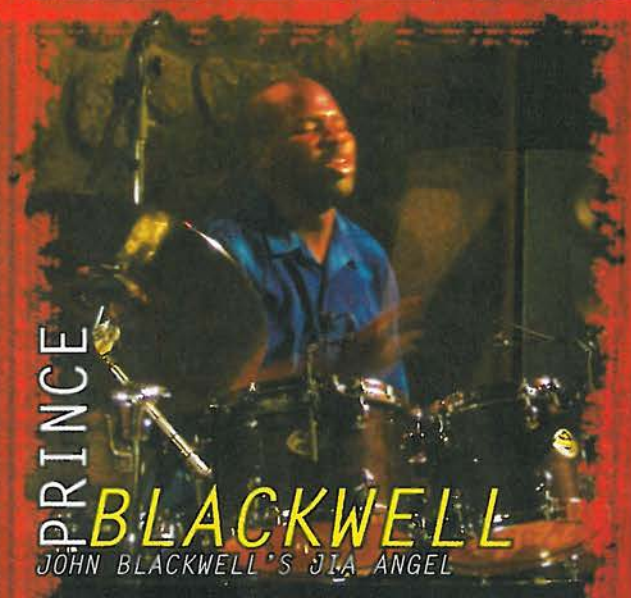

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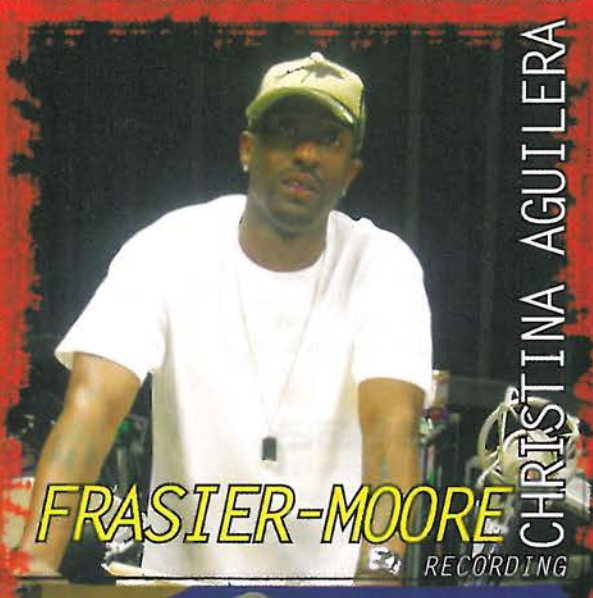
JOHN BLACKWELL'S JIA ANGEL
THE TONIGHT SHOW PRINCE



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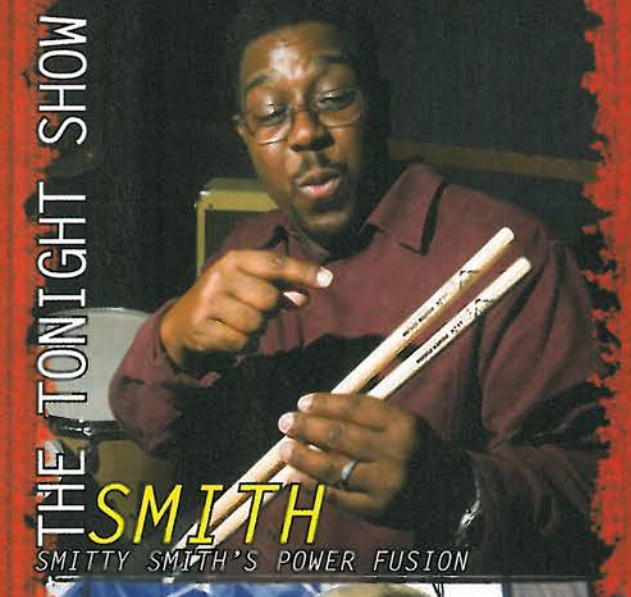

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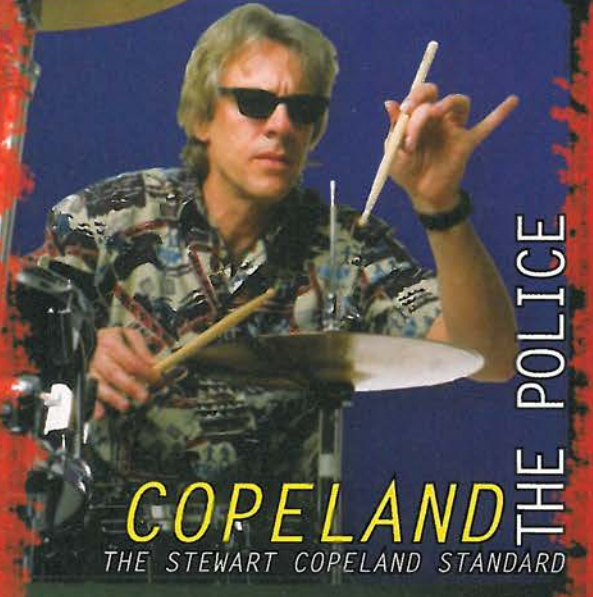
SMITTY SMITH'S POWER FUSION



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Meinl Soundcaster Cymbals

A New Alloy Creates A New Sound Palette

HITS

consistent, integrated series of sounds

interesting harmonics, especially in rides

projection and sound ought to work well with amplified music

MISSES

bold sound not really appropriate for jazz/acoustic music

China cymbals have a long decay, with too flat a profile

by Martin Patmos

Meinl's Soundcaster series is a totally new addition to the company's already extensive cymbal range. The idea is to offer a complete line crafted out of B12 alloy (88% copper, 12% tin), which is said to produce especially rich and expressive cymbal sounds. Most of Meinl's other lines are crafted from B8 alloy, while the Byzance line uses B20.

Physical Characteristics

The Soundcasters are available in Medium and Powerful models. Their production involves even, consistent hammering and lathing that tapers towards the edge. According to the company, these production methods lead to cymbals with "precise stick definition" and "controlled, even decay" of harmonic overtones.

The cymbals are a rich, golden-bronze color, with a finish that shows off the lathing over the small hammer marks. The fine lathing is reminiscent of the grooves in an LP, making the cymbals look somewhat like gold records. The Soundcaster logo and the model designation are printed in black on the top of the cymbal beneath the stamp and serial number. The Meinl logo is found on the top and the bottom of each cymbal.

Acoustics

The Soundcasters we reviewed possessed an interesting series of harmonics that made me think of clock chimes hidden within the cymbal sound. When I tapped them with a finger or mallet, they produced a sound with some warmth and an ethereal hint of darkness. However, this was countered by a pronounced attack, clear definition, and a cutting intensity when I struck the cymbals with a stick—especially at medium to loud volumes. As a series, the cymbals generally have long, even decays.

All of these characteristics together create a bold, almost brash sound that would be especially well suited for playing in amplified situations. I don't think the cymbals would be appropriate for an acoustic or jazz gig. The various models within the line mix together exceptionally well, with the individual cymbal voices standing out from the overall swell.

Rides

Of all the Soundcasters, the ride cymbals were the most emblematic of the series. The 20" Medium ride had nice stick definition and a smooth, medium-long decay. There was less tonal variation across the bow of the cymbal than I would have expected, although this is a minor complaint, as the cymbal performed well otherwise. The

bell was reasonably isolated and it cut nicely, especially when hit with the shoulder of the stick. Dynamically, this ride came up nicely, with a responsive, controllable range.

The bell on the 20" Powerful ride was more isolated and cutting than that of the Medium ride, while the body seemed to have a bit more variation across its surface. Because of its heavier weight, it had increased definition and a tighter attack and decay.

The two rides complemented each other in an interesting way. The bow of the Powerful ride was pitched higher than that of the Medium model, while the bell of the Medium was higher in pitch than that of the Powerful ride. This bow-vs.-bell cross-pitch allowed for some interesting double ride patterns. Although not reviewed here, the Powerful ride is also available in a 22" size.

Hi-Hats

The Medium and Powerful hi-hats were perfect counterparts to the ride cymbals. Top and bottom cymbals were well matched, even though the bottom cymbals featured large hammer marks, in contrast to the smaller marks found throughout the rest of the Soundcaster series.

Both pairs of hats elicited strong yet not *too* pointed "chicks" with the foot, which stood out nicely against the overall sound of a drumkit. (The Powerful model was slightly stronger due to its heavier weight.) Both sets of hats splashed nicely as well, mixing perfectly with the rides.

Both pairs had solid, responsive stick definition and plenty of cut when played closed with sticks. As I gradually opened them up, they produced increasingly proportionate white noise, providing a nice range of expression. Loose, open quarter notes created a classic rock-out racket, especially on the Powerful hats. Meinl offers both of these hats as Soundwave models as well.

Crashes

The Medium and Powerful crashes are available in a variety of sizes, which creates a nice range of voices to work with. Both weights are available in 16", 17", and 18" sizes, with Powerful models roughly a minor third higher in pitch than Mediums of the same size. All of these crashes produced a fat quarter note when hit.

There was plenty of projection and cut from the Medium crashes, followed by a smooth decay after the initial impact. The Powerful crashes lived up to their designation, with a decay that seemingly drew out the attack for an intense statement.

The 14" and 15" Medium crash models offered quick accents, with fast response and relatively short decays. On the other hand, the 19" and 20" Powerful crashes erupted with a bigger and slightly warmer/darker sound when compared to the others. If the 16" and 17" crashes are the "quarter notes," these two bad boys are the "whole notes," without a doubt.

All of the Soundcaster crashes have usable bells, with the bells on the Powerful models being a bit more isolated. However, the crashes have little potential for doubling as rides due to their projection, volume, and response. These are all definitely crash cymbals.

Splashes And Chinas

The Soundcaster series includes a nice range of effects cymbals. The 8" and 10" splashes we tried were thinner when compared with the rest of the cymbal line, allowing them to offer a fast, bright splash with just a slight tang. I preferred the 8" over the 10", purely as a matter of personal taste. The Soundcaster line also includes 6" and 12" splash models.

The 16" and 18" China cymbals sent for review were a bit more of a challenge for me to like. While they have the general China shape, they have a relatively flatter profile than I would have liked. When I mounted them upside-down, as is commonly done with Chinas, I found this profile detrimental to striking the flanged edge with the shaft of the stick. Mounting the cymbal right side up and crashing the edge (as you would a standard crash cymbal) seemed to be a better striking choice.

When I tapped the Chinas with my finger, they had a pleasant, almost gong-like sound. When I played them with a stick, they spoke with a loud, clangy pang—but with no dark, trashy hiss whatsoever. The harmonics were rather abrasive (the 16" more so than the 18"), and they had a long decay that offered no chance for a short, barking accent. The combination of loud attack and long decay caused a lack of stick definition, which made the Chinas ineffective for riding. While some people might appreciate the sound of these Chinas, obviously I have a different idea in my head. A 20" model is available in addition to the sizes we tried.

Conclusion

I think Meinl is exploring some interesting territory with the B12 alloy. Overall, the Soundcaster series offers some exciting possibilities, with distinct harmonics, strong attack, and plenty of projection, volume, and sustain. Of course, such a strong sound is not for everybody. But with these characteristics I think the Soundcasters would stand up quite nicely in an amplified setting—especially if distortion pedals are involved.

THE NUMBERS

10" Medium crash	$135
12" Medium crash	$155
14" Medium crash	$210
15" Medium crash	$240
16" crashes & China	$275
17" crashes	$300
18" crashes & China	$325
19" Powerful crash	$355
20" rides & Powerful crash	$380
14" hi-hats	$420

(615) 227-5090, www.meinlcymbals.com.

Latin Percussion Matador Custom Congas And Bongos

Mid-Priced Marvels

HITS

great value

colorful new look

congas feature comfortable Soft Strike rims

by Norman Arnold

Drummers and percussionists who are familiar with LP's semi-professional Matador series will certainly like the attention to detail given to the new Matador Custom models. The line offers a quinto/conga pair with a stand, along with individual quintos, congas, and tumbas sold separately. We received all three sizes for this review.

Construction Details

Matador Custom drums are made of the same Siam oak that's used with other Matador models (as well as with LP's Salsa and Classic series). The drums are constructed using the ply stave method, which provides a very beefy, resonant sound for the price range. A height of 30" is standard.

Matador Soft Strike rims are unique to this series. The rims sit low and out of the way and are very comfortable on the hands.

The most obvious new visual additions to the Matador Custom line are the black matte finish on the rims and the "horned" side lug plates. In addition, updated paint choices include a very cool sunburst paint job, which was on our review models.

When purchased together as a pair, the quinto and conga come with a double-braced stand that holds the drums at a good distance apart. It's not a very heavy stand, so it shouldn't add too much to the load for working musicians to carry around. Besides, when the drums are mounted on the stand, they have considerably more resonance and low-end presence than when they're placed on the floor.

The Congas

If I had to pick just one Matador Custom drum to take along to a gig, the 11" quinto would probably be it. Its sound is big enough to carry in most situations. When the drum is tuned to a lower pitch, it sounds very warm. When it's tuned up high—into more of a "soloing" range—it has a lot of bite that would cut through on most live gigs. Using the quinto primarily for soloing would certainly leave room for tuning options with the conga and tumba.

The 11¾" conga has a very beefy low end to it, yet it remains a crisp-sounding drum. I tried a range of tuning with this drum and found it to be very versatile.

As far as the 12½" tumba goes: Buy a big drum—get a big drum sound. I left this drum tuned low, and it sounded great in that range. Its low end is very warm and resonant—especially with the well-matched rawhide heads.

From a practical point of view, the tumba is a pretty heavy drum. If you're working a lot and carrying your gear yourself, you might want to lift the Matador Custom congas a few times to get a feel for what the day-to-day schlep might be.

The Bongos

The Matador Custom bongos we reviewed featured the same unique sunburst paint job and black matte–finished

rims as was on the congas. The rims on the bongos are not the same Soft Strike versions as are on the congas. But they still sit low on the drums, making them quite comfortable to play.

The bongos are very tight-sounding, with a tonality and projection that makes them a good match with the congas. Note to LP: It might be nice to add a stand with the bongos and sell them packaged with the quinto/conga combination as a total setup for the stand-up percussionist. That would certainly be a nice-looking and great-sounding set of drums.

Conclusion

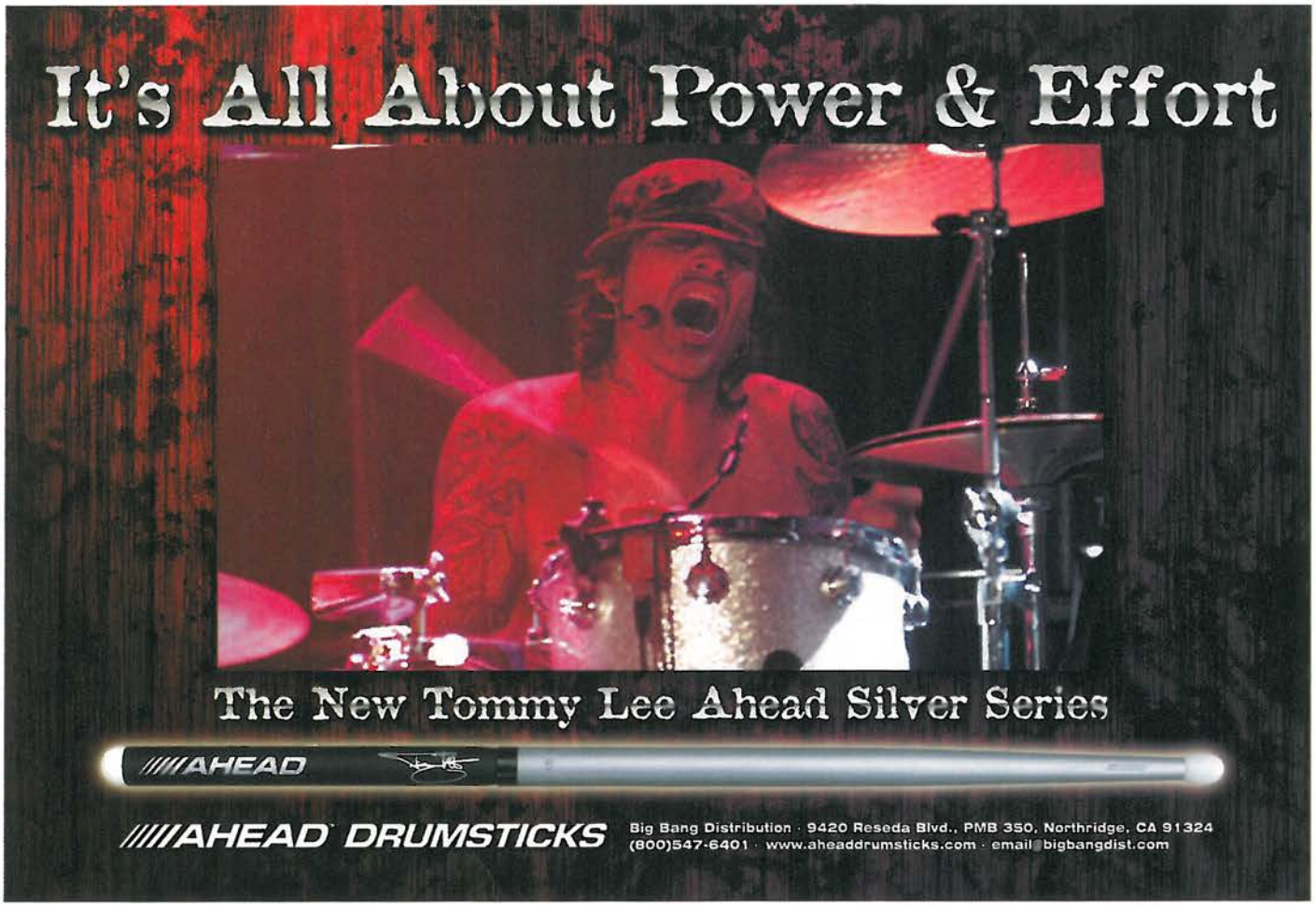
These days, percussionists (at least those in LA, where I work) require a larger range of sounds in their arsenal, from standard salsa congas to a more "world music" sound. The Matador Custom drums are a really versatile range that would serve well on everything from pop gigs to TV recording sessions. And they offer their versatile sound and appealing looks in an "intermediate" price range. Such a deal!

THE NUMBERS

Matador Custom wood congas

11" quinto	$339
11¾" conga	$349
12½" tumba	$369
quinto/conga set, with stand	$749
M301 Custom wood bongos	$159

(888) LP-MUSIC, www.lpmusic.com.



Puresound UltraSonic Copper Snare Drum

Like A Shiny New Penny

HITS

crisp, bright, yet warm sound

beautiful copper shell

Nickel Drumworks strainer is smooth and precise

MISSES

drum is pricey

soft bag should be replaced with hard-shell case

by Rick Long

Puresound made its mark in the percussion world a few years ago by utilizing new designs and materials to make some of the best snare wires around. Since 2002, they've also offered the innovative Speedball line of bass drum beaters. Now they've entered the specialty snare drum market with a copper-shelled model dubbed the UltraSonic.

The Specs

The snare drum we were sent for review is a 5x14 vintage-style model with a thin-walled, rolled copper shell sealed with clear lacquer. The seam in the shell is completely invisible on the outside of the drum. The thin shell helps reduce the weight of the drum to nine pounds, which is light compared to many other metal-shell snares.

The drum features chromed brass "barbell"-shaped lugs, 2.3-mm triple-flanged steel counter-hoops, and Puresound's own 30-strand "Super" snare wires. The heads supplied with the drum are Remo Ambassadors stamped with the Puresound logo.

The drum is fitted with a Nickel Drumworks precision snare strainer made of bulletproof glass. The action of this model is more precise than that of other strainers, due to the use of cylinders that define the travel of the mechanism. It smoothly and quietly pulls the snare wires straight and evenly against the snare head.

The Sound

Puresound developed the UltraSonic snare drum for "serious players" seeking "extraordinarily bright, dry, powerful, and articulate sound, wide dynamic range, and lightning-fast response." The "serious player" status is highlighted by the drum's list price. Still, the UltraSonic does a good job of living up to the company's description.

The stick response of the drum is quick. This would be expected with the 30-strand snare wires, but the effect is enhanced by the precision action of the Nickel Drumworks strainer and the even tuning provided by the 2.3-mm triple-flanged hoops. The sound is warm for a metal drum but retains the ringing overtones common to the breed. Only a modest effort to dampen the overtones was required to allow the full-bodied, bright, crisp tone of this drum to shine through.

Brush response on the UltraSonic drum is also quite good. The bright portion of the tone provided by the copper shell gives the sound from the brushes an increased ability to cut through the mix. The warm portion of the tone gives brush strokes more fullness and presence.

Final Thoughts

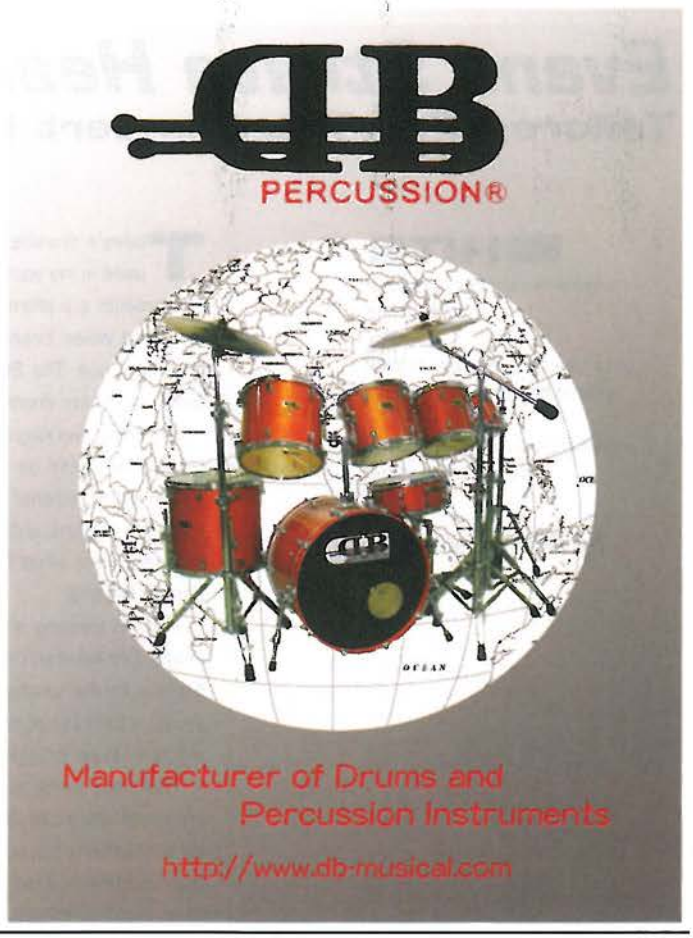
A padded vinyl carrying bag is supplied with each UltraSonic snare drum. This is a nice touch on Puresound's part. But if I were carrying around a $1,000 snare drum, I'd put it in a well-padded hard-shell case. It would be even nicer of Puresound (and perhaps a good sales incentive) to provide such a case to begin with.

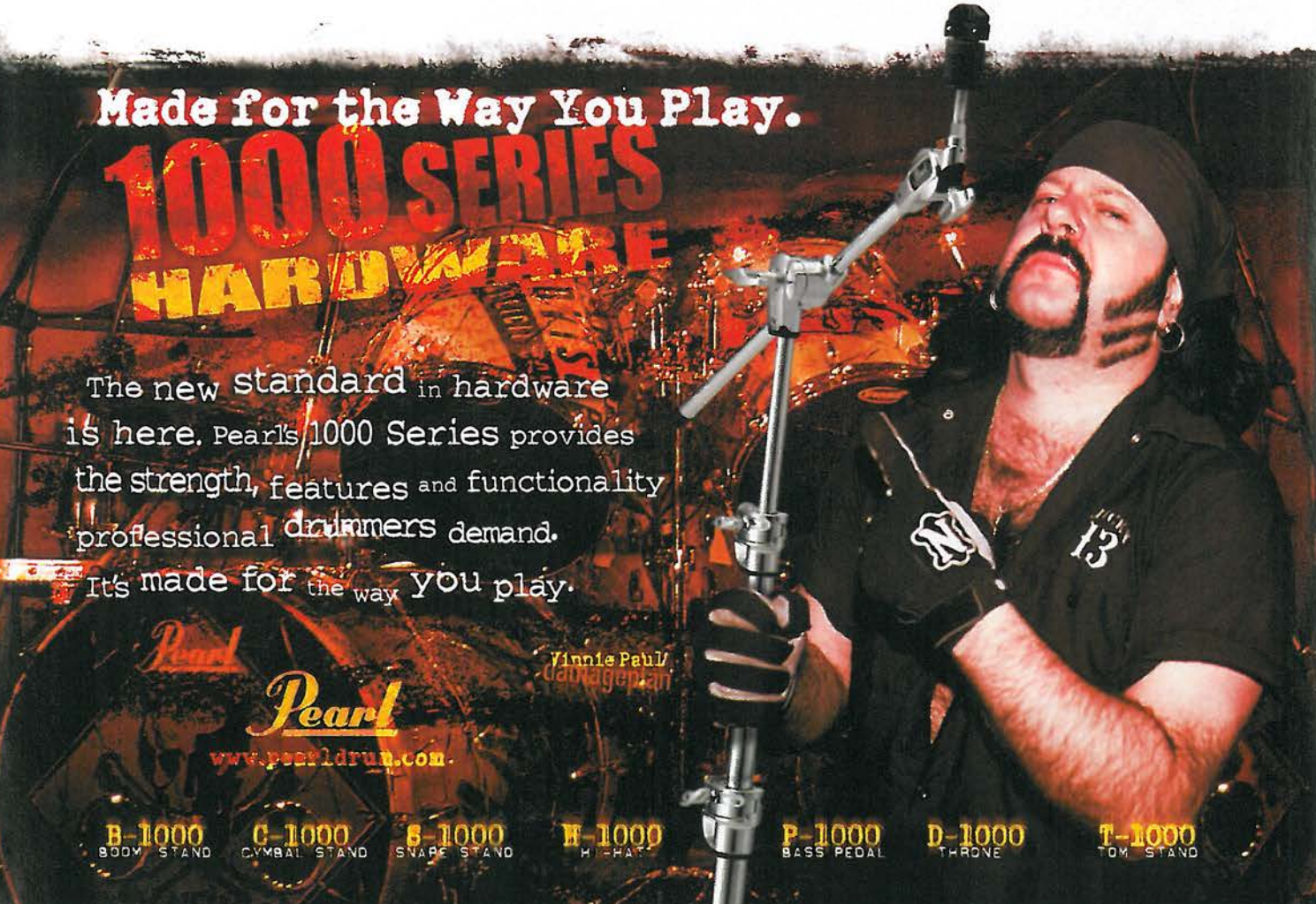
Each UltraSonic drum also comes with a certificate of authenticity marked with the serial number from the drum's badge, signed by Puresound president Yoav DeBasc. The certificate should help the drum retain its value over time, since only two hundred of these drums are slated to be manufactured.

THE NUMBERS

5x14 UltraSonic copper-shell snare drum..... **$995.95**

(818) 990-1562, www.puresoundpercussion.com.





Evans Strata Heads

Tailored For The Concert Percussionist

HITS

timpani heads have full sound over wide range

concert bass drum heads are full without being overly "boomy"

concert snare heads have dry but resonant sound

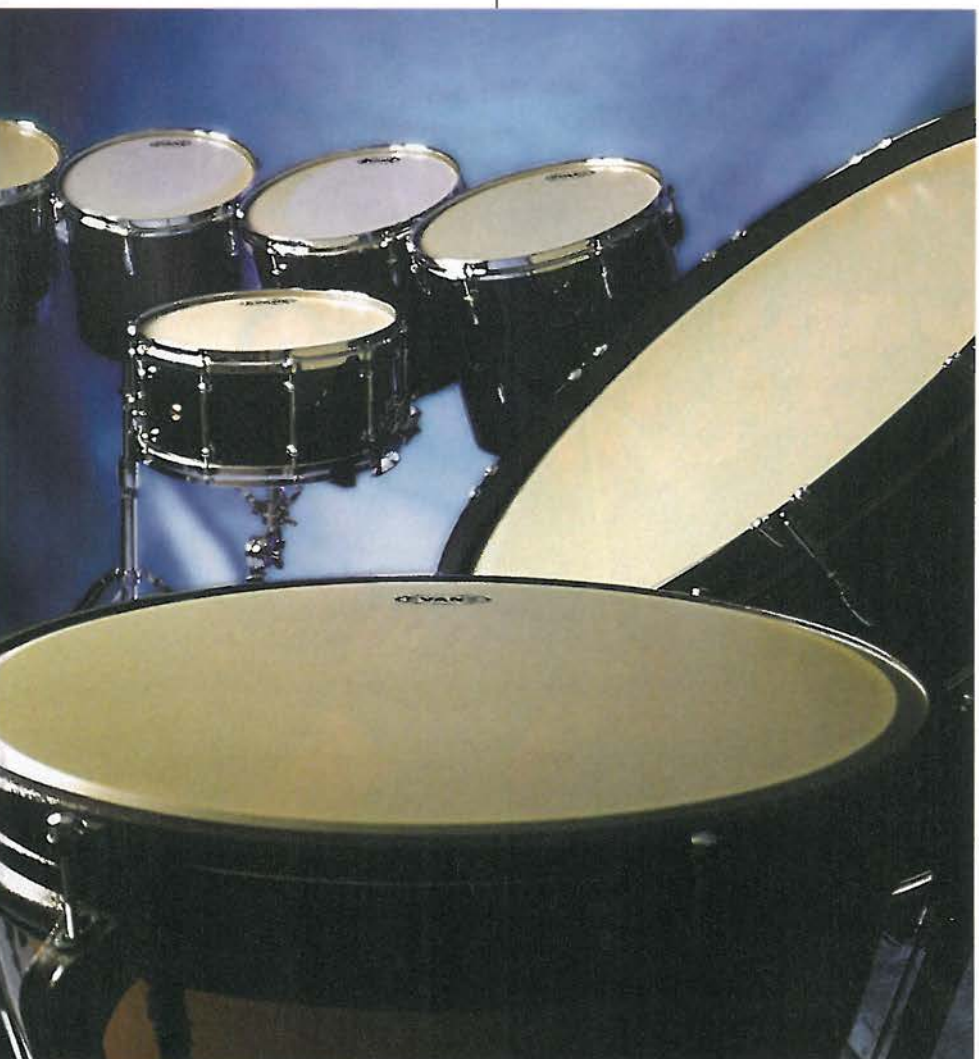
by Rick Mattingly

Today's drumheads are much more consistent, versatile, and dependable than the heads I used in my youth. Still, I've sometimes been frustrated by the fact that "concert" percussion instruments are often stuck with heads designed for rock 'n' roll drumset or marching. So I was intrigued when Evans announced a line of heads designed specifically for concert band and orchestra use. The Strata series includes heads for timpani, as well as for concert bass drums, toms, and snare drums. We received samples of each for this review.

I've been working with a high school percussion department for the past couple of years, so I tested the heads on the school's instruments. They aren't the top-of-the-line instruments you'd find in a professional symphony orchestra or in some college percussion departments, but they're certainly not junk, either. They're pretty much what you'd find at your average high school, and are comparable to what I've seen at many colleges and played on with numerous community bands and orchestras.

After reviewing a wide variety of drums and drumheads for *MD* over the past twenty-plus years, I've learned that an average drum with the right head usually sounds better than a great drum with the wrong head. My point is, before you spend a lot of money to upgrade a drum, spend a little to upgrade your drumheads. It can be like keeping the same computer but upgrading to a newer program.

That was certainly the situation with my school's instruments. In every case, the sound improved once the Strata heads were mounted. Instead of sounding like marching instruments or something borrowed from a drumset, the instruments now sound like true concert band/orchestra drums.



Timpani Heads

The most dramatic difference was in the sound of our timpani, which are standard Ludwig Universal models ranging from 23" to 30". I've played this timpani model with probably every brand of head, including calfskin heads. But I've never heard those drums sound as rich as they've sounded since I fitted them with Strata heads.

The sound of the Strata heads has a lot of the warmth and body of a good calfskin timpani head. But there's more clarity and articulation than with any calf head I ever played on. Each Strata head also had a wider tuning range than I expected. On the 30" drum, I could get a low E that didn't sound "flappy," while the low F and G sounded especially solid and rich. At the other end, the 23" drumhead produced high Fs and Gs that sounded rich and full. Granted, most timpani heads can get those pitches, but they often lack resonance, and they start to sound more like timbales or RotoToms.

According to Evans, "The Strata coating has no grit in it, and the formula is slightly altered to allow it to be more flexible, enabling the head to vibrate more." The surface is also said to reduce the wear on felt timpani-stick balls. Also, because the Strata timpani heads are

pre-tensioned, they don't have a pre-shaped collar. So they lie flat on the drum. This means that the drum's counterhoop rides a little higher, which will necessitate adjusting the tuning gauge on certain models of timpani.

I've always tried to be coldly objective in product reviews, but I have to gush a little with respect to Strata timpani heads. I am *very* impressed.

Snare Drum Heads

Strata snare drum batters are available in four models: Strata 1000, Strata Staccato 1000, Strata 700, and Strata Staccato 700. The 1000 model is 10 mil thick, making it essentially a medium head, while the 700 model is 7 mil thick, making it a thin. The Staccato models have a 2-mil "overtone control ring" mounted on the underside, extending about ½" in from the bearing edge.

I tried the Staccato 1000 and 700 heads on a 6½x14 Pearl Export metal snare drum. Yes, it's a drumset instrument, but I've been looking for a way to adapt it to sound more like a concert snare drum. Equipping it with an Evans Strata Staccato head pretty much did the trick (although I still want to replace the spiral snares with cable snares).

Both heads gave the drum a richer, darker sound than any of the standard white-coated batters I've used in the past. The 700 model was a bit brighter and higher-pitched, and would be excellent in larger bands where the snare drum needs to cut. Our band is medium sized, and we need a sound that blends and fills more than it cuts, so I was happier with the darker and lower-pitched 1000 model. Both heads were articulate and sensitive, and both produced a slightly military sound that was dry without lacking resonance.

Once again, we didn't need a different drum, just the right head.

Concert Bass Drum

I don't know who decided that our band needed a 36" Ludwig concert bass drum, but that's what we've got. We haven't used it very much, because it was very boomy and hard to control. The Strata concert bass drum heads have now made it a useful instrument for us.

Evans makes Strata bass drum heads with and without center Power Dots. The heads we received had the Dots, which are said to lengthen sustain and deepen the fundamentals. The heads reduced a lot of the drum's extra "boom," resulting is a relatively dry sound that has tremendous bottom end, rich tone, and excellent articulation. It's a big sound, to be sure, but not an uncontrollable one.

Concert Toms

True concert toms only have one head, so drumhead tone and resonance are crucial. The Strata 1000 Concert heads score again. They are single-ply, 10-mil heads. When we installed them on our Ludwig concert toms, they produced rich, dark, warm sounds that had a dry but resonant tone with clear articulation.

Other Applications

Evans is marketing Strata heads strictly for concert use, but I couldn't resist trying them on the drumset I use for acoustic small-group jazz gigs. The Strata 1000 Concert heads sounded great on my vintage 12" and 14" Gretsch toms, and the Strata Staccato 700 head sounded great on a vintage 5x14 Ludwig Supraphonic snare drum. In particular, I liked the way brushes sounded on the textured Strata surface.

Strata heads are not designed for ultra-heavy hitting. So I wouldn't use these heads for rock, or even for general-purpose drumset playing. But when a warm, intimate jazz timbre is called for, they sound great.

Conclusion

Compared to the wide variety of drumsticks, mallets, and cymbals that exist to address every possible musical sound and style, there are relatively few models of drumheads from which to choose. With the Strata heads, Evans has addressed the specific needs of orchestral and concert band drummers and percussionists. Bravo!

THE NUMBERS

Timpani Heads

23"	$124.00
26"	$127.00
29"	$136.00
32"	$142.00

Note: Heads are available in sizes from 19" to 37". Representative sizes and prices are shown above.

Concert Bass Drum Heads

28"	$105.00
30"	$110.00
32"	$115.00
36"	$120.00
40"	$130.00

Note: Add $10 per head for Power Dot center.

Concert Snare Drum Heads

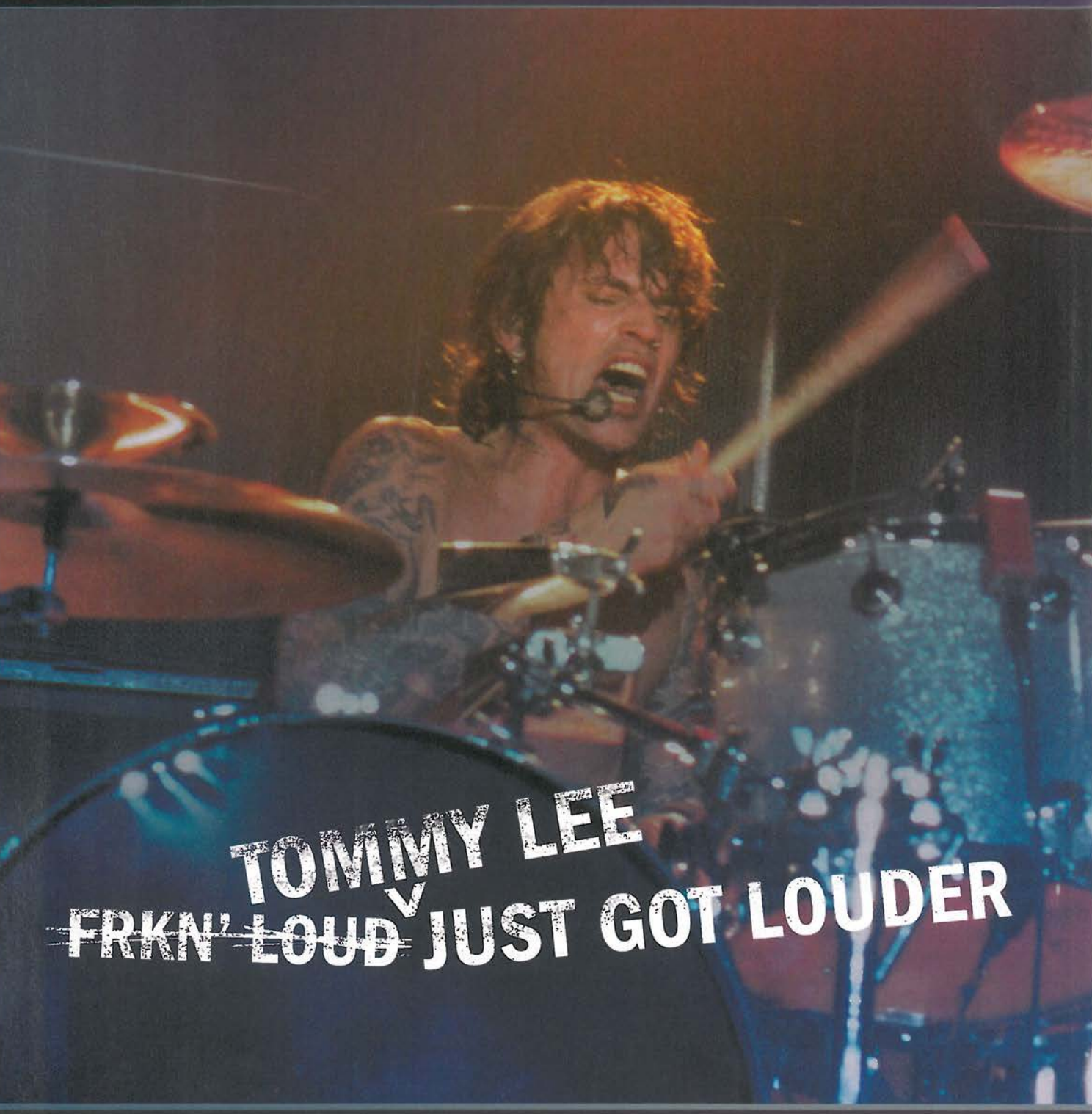
13"	$ 23.00
14"	$ 24.00
13" Staccato	$ 27.00
14" Staccato	$ 28.00

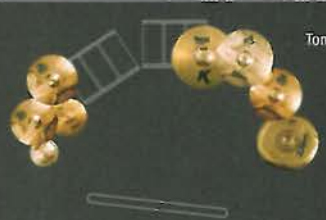
Note: Prices are identical for 700 and 1000 series.

Concert Tom Heads

6"	$ 19.00
8"	$ 19.50
10"	$ 20.50
12"	$ 21.50
13"	$ 23.00
14"	$ 24.00
15"	$ 26.00
16"	$ 28.00
18"	$ 35.00
20"	$ 37.50

(800) 323-2746,
www.evansdrumheads.com.





Tommy's Kit:
- 15" A Rock HiKats
- 11" Oriental Trash Splash
- 18" Z Custom Medium Crash
- 19" Z Custom Projection Crash
- 22" K Heavy Ride
- 9½" ZIL-BEL (large) inverted on ride
- 20" A Custom Projection Crash
- 19" Z Custom Thrash Ride
- 20" Oriental China Trash
- 40" Gong

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How do you get more volume from one of the hardest hitting drummers on the planet? Mix some "Red, White & Crüe" adrenaline with the new Thrash Ride, throw in a few more Crashes from Zildjian's Exclusive Z Custom Series, and you've got instant "FRKN' LOUD". Tommy knows. Your turn.

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Rick Malkin

Antonio Sanchez

Tripping The Clave Fantastic

BY KEN MICALLEF

Anyone lucky enough to attend *Modern Drummer*'s Festival Weekend 2003 witnessed a mind-boggling exposition of south of the border rhythmic expertise. Though he later apologized for the broken computer that was supposed to accompany him, Antonio Sanchez executed one of the most incredible displays of independence ever seen at the *MD* event. A master of the left-foot clave, Sanchez proved that anything is possible if you have determination, talent, and imagination.

Seated behind a kit equipped with enough cymbals to decorate a Christmas tree, Sanchez started out playing a simple fusion groove. Using unusual muting techniques on the toms, Sanchez addressed beat 1 of each bar on a left-foot pedal-controlled cowbell while simultaneously pumping out 8th-note hi-hat figures. Suddenly he began playing a left-foot clave cowbell pattern as his sticks whizzed overhead with a pulsing bass drum figure below.

Blowing over the constant chock-chock-chock, chock-chock of the clave, Sanchez sounded like a mad mathematician exploring rhythmic possibilities. The accompanying phrases flew fast and furious: blazing floor tom/bass drum rolls, danzon snare patterns, a songo groove, a right-hand cascara, a cymbal crash (finally!), a sustained jazz ride pattern, and then, the real fun: Against the left-foot clave, Sanchez played elastic 16th notes on the snare drum with his left hand, changing tempo and rate at will. Then he went double-time on the ride cymbal and played left-hand clave (opposing the left-foot clave) while simultaneously playing a mambo pattern on a right-hand cowbell!

If this sounds simply insane, Antonio Sanchez will quickly tell you that for him, the music rules the technique, not the other way around. And though he has the chops of a Greek god by way of Latin America, Sanchez can easily play a gig where he never obscures the safety of 2 and 4. His technical mastery belies the musicality that he demonstrates in every situation.

Gigs

Pat Metheny Group

•

Michael Brecker

•

Danilo Perez

•

Charlie Haden

•

Adam Rogers

•

Chris Potter

•

Marcus Roberts

Paul La Raia

As heard on such Pat Metheny Group tracks as "The Gathering Sky" (from *Speaking Of Now*) and "Part One" (from the brilliant new disc, *The Way Up*), Sanchez's art is a highly developed language, informed by not only classical piano studies, fusion, and jazz drumming, but the Cuban, Mexican, Brazilian, and other "Latin" rhythms that surrounded the thirty-three-year-old as a youngster in Mexico City.

The grandson of Mexican film star Ignacio Lopez Tarso, Antonio began drumming at age five and was soon playing along with Stewart Copeland and Neil Peart. At seventeen, he enrolled in Mexico's National Conservatory of Music. In 1993 he attended Berklee College of Music, and, after graduating Magna Cum Laude, won a scholarship to study for his masters in jazz improvisation at the New England Conservatory. There he met pianist Danilo Perez, and his career began. Antonio toured with Perez, and by the time he hit New York in '99, his name was all over town.

Whether playing an acoustic Latin fusion gig at the Jazz Gallery or working traditional terrain with his own trio at Dizzy's Club Coca Cola, Antonio's identity comes through. His dazzling technique, equal parts speed, rhythmic mastery, and exceptional dynamic control, is always expressed through micro-supreme attention to low-level detail. His drumming is full of the nuance usually associated with classical musicians who must execute extreme dynamic levels. His employers include Michael Brecker, Charlie Haden, Adam Rogers, Chris Potter, Marcus Roberts, Claudia Acuna, Janice Seigel, Luciana Souza, and Victor Mendoza, to name but a few.

While Antonio tours the world with The Pat Metheny Group, he also maintains a core role in what can loosely be called the new acoustic fusion movement, lead by such daring improvisers as John Patitucci, Avishai Cohen, David Sanchez, Avi Lebovich, and Miguel Zenon, musicians

ANTONIO'S METHENY GROUP KIT

Drums: Yamaha Maple Absolute Nouveau Custom in purple fade finish
- **A.** 5x12 snare
- **B.** 5x14 snare
- **C.** 8x10 tom
- **D.** 8x12 tom
- **E.** 14x14 floor tom
- **F.** 16x16 floor tom
- **G.** 16x20 bass drum
- **H.** Yamaha electronic pad

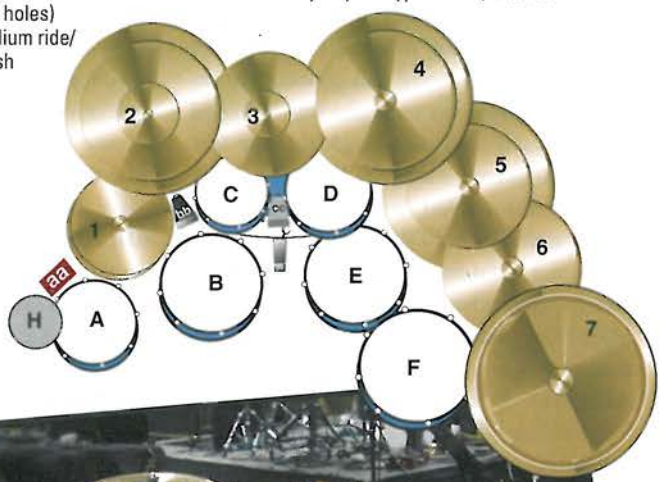
Cymbals: Zildjian
1. 14" K Constantinople hi-hats
2. 22" A Custom flat ride/ 18" K Dark crash/ 8" A Custom splash (inverted)
3. 16" EFX crash (without the jingles) / 6" A Custom splash (inverted)
4. 22" K Constantinople ride/ 18" prototype crash (with holes)
5. 22" K Constantinople medium ride/ 16" K Constantinople crash
6. 18" EFX crash (without the jingles)
7. 22" Swish (with eight rivets)

Percussion: Latin Percussion
- **aa.** Jam Block (red)
- **bb.** Black Salsa cowbell
- **cc.** Silver Mambo bell

Hardware: Yamaha. The pedal setup (from left to right) is a Yamaha single bass drum pedal attached to an LP Gajate bracket holding a black LP Cha Cha bell, hi-hat pedal, and left bass drum pedal (of the double pedal), all of which are played with the left foot. On the right side of the kit is the main pedal (of the double pedal) and a single bass drum pedal attached to an LP Gajate bracket holding an LP Silver Mambo bell (positioned just underneath floor tom)

Heads: Evans J1 on snare batter, coated G1s on tom batters, clear G1s on bottoms, coated G1 on kick batter, EQ1 black on front

Sticks: Zildjian prototype model, brushes



for whom jazz is a melting pot heated by Mexican tumbao, Puerto Rican jibaro, and Cuban clave. Antonio Sanchez's drumming is at the heart of this new sound, fusing it together with creativity, sensitivity, and fire.

MD spoke with Sanchez at his Astoria, New York apartment. Sparsely furnished with a Nepalese drum in one corner and a *Clockwork Orange* poster on the wall, the apartment looks barely lived in. This musician is obviously too busy to decorate.

Left-Foot Clave

MD: Your performance at *Modern Drummer*'s Festival Weekend 2003 is the stuff of legend. After your solo you said that your computer program wasn't working so you had to wing it. What would you have done differently?

Antonio: I wasn't planning on doing such a lengthy solo. I was going to play along to "Proof" and "The Gathering Sky." I planned to play a solo like the one in "The Gathering Sky" and then just keep on going. But the computer broke and all of a sudden I had an hour to fill.

MD: Is altering the clave on each limb as you did at the festival easy for you?

Antonio: No, no. I definitely had to work on it.

MD: How did you do that?

Antonio: After spending a lot of time just focusing on my feet, eventually I could "let go" of my lower body and concentrate on what was going on over the top. I would record myself to double check that my feet were still correct. As I play I'm listening in the back of my mind, but if I pay too much attention to the feet I'll lose what's happening on top. I did *many* exercises to get completely independent with my lower body.

MD: What did you practice for independence?

Antonio: I recommend Ted Reed's *Syncopation*. Play swing, Latin, or Brazilian ostinatos, and read the melodies from the book against it with any limb. If you're playing Latin, you could play 1 and 3 on the hi-hat and the tumbao pattern on the bass drum. If you really want to challenge yourself, you can play the clave pattern on the left foot and read the melody with the bass drum. That will definitely free up your right foot from the tumbao pattern.

MD: How should a beginner approach playing left-foot clave?

Antonio: A lot of drummers get into the clave without listening to any Latin music. You have to listen to what the clave is supposed to sound like and understand its function before you can apply it to the drumset. Otherwise it's just going to sound like an exercise. You won't have any musical depth to what you're doing; you'll play patterns over it that have absolutely nothing to do with the language. Before I ever tried left-foot clave, I'd been playing Latin music for a long time, so the clave was natural.

MD: Can you explain the clave variations that you played in the Festival Weekend solo?

Antonio: For most of the solo I'm doing clave in 4/4. Eventually I switch to a clave in 7/8, which consists of two bars: The first 7/8 bar starts as a 2/3 clave, so it doesn't start on the downbeat. The second 7/8 bar starts as a 3/2 clave, so the first hit of clave lands on beat 1 of that bar. I play all of that with my left foot on the cowbell. I also play the 1 of every two bars on the other cowbell that I have set up to the right of my primary bass drum pedal. I play it with my heel, and it helps me ground things a little when I'm soloing on top. I like to hear that 1 to help me keep my place in the seven and the two-bar cycle.

I also play a 5/4 clave, which I think of as two 4/4 bars, because if you're thinking in cut time, the clave is two bars long, and an extra two beats, which put together would be the equivalent of 10/8. I say it's 5/4 because it's easier to feel the broader pulse than the smaller subdivisions. It makes it easier to groove to.

MD: And your left hand is playing a clave opposing the left-foot clave?

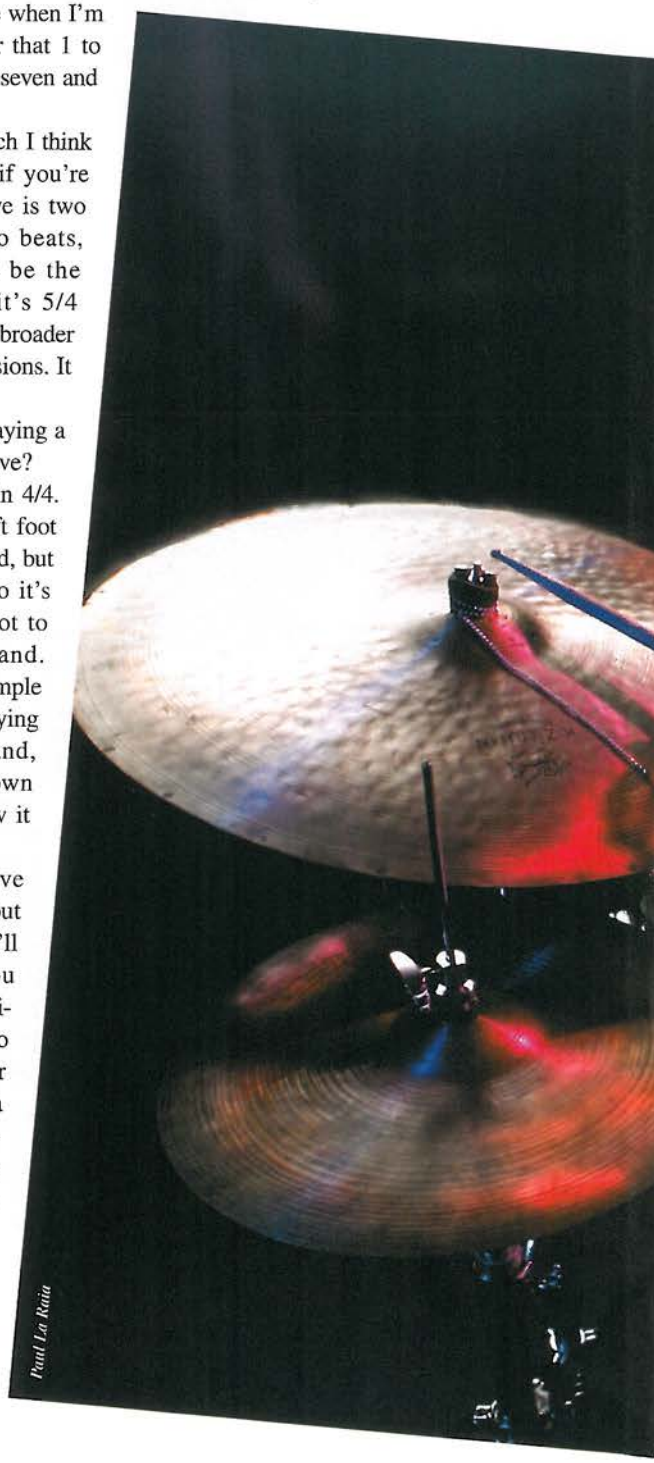
Antonio: I only do that part in 4/4. It's just a 3/2 clave on the left foot and a 2/3 clave on the left hand, but I'm playing it in half time so it's two clave patterns on the foot to one clave pattern on the hand. Later in the solo I play an example of 4/4 left-foot clave while playing a 7/8 clave with the left hand, speeding up and slowing down the 7/8. That was just to show it *can* be done.

These are all concepts I've been working on for years, but that doesn't necessarily mean I'll play them with a band. You should never sacrifice musicality for ego. What we want to do is work and be called by other musicians to play. It's always a huge compliment when somebody like Charlie Haden calls me for a gig and has no idea that I can do this stuff.

MD: Were you fluent with the left-foot clave as a young musician?

Antonio: I didn't grow up doing it; I learned it later in life and worked at it. Before I started working on it, I thought about it a lot. Then when I actually sat down to work on it, I could almost do it right away. I had heard Ed Uribe and Horacio "El Negro" Hernandez doing it in 1995. I took Horacio's thing and tried to come up with my own technique.

I thought playing the clave out of time would be something different, playing it more elastically. I think of it as if I'm a piano player. A piano player can comp with his left hand and solo with his right. I'm comping for myself with the clave or different


Paul La Raia

left-foot sounds. Then the person listening can relate to a rhythmic pattern that is continuous, and I can impose all these other things over the top.

MD: You also displaced the clave at the festival.

Antonio: That exercise was just to get some independence with the other limbs. The left-foot clave is not displaced, the left hand is. The clave continues; I'm playing an ostinato with my right hand, which could be something like just half notes or quarter notes on a bongo bell or mambo bell, and then I displace the left hand by an 8th note in different places in the bar. You can apply that to any kind of music: displace every beat of the bar until you've covered the whole bar full of subdivisions.

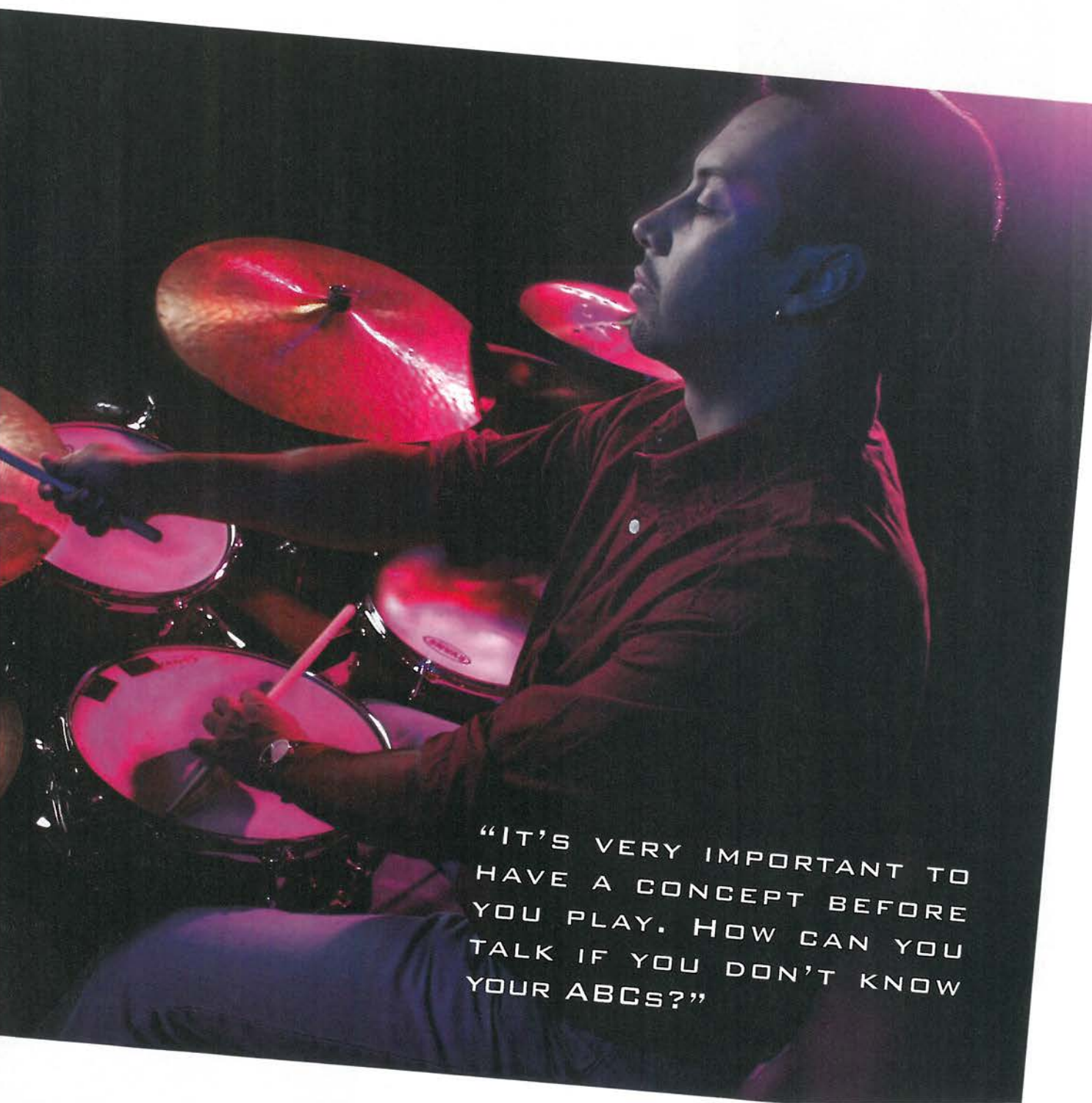
MD: If you have a student who is comfortable with left-foot clave, how do you advance him?

Antonio: One of the most important things you have to be able to do is shift between 6/8 and 4/4. That's one of the main things that will make the music swing. When you're playing Latin music, it's always on the edge of 6/8 and 4/4. Each has a bit of the other one in it. Sometimes Latin music feels stiff; that's because there's too much 4/4 feel in it. You need to imply the 6/8 to make it swing.

Striking With Elvin In Mind

MD: In the solo you were also striking the floor tom as if you were pointing the tips of your sticks at the drumhead.

Antonio: I'm just trying to mute the drum as I hit it so I don't get the overtone. I'm trying to imitate conga or bata drums. When you're playing conga or bata with your palm, you can mute the stroke right away if you leave your hand on the head. People don't take



advantage of all the timbre possibilities on the drumset.

MD: How do you get those different timbres?

Antonio: I like the sound of wood. I love hitting just the rims of the toms. I'm constantly looking for different textures by hitting the head and the rim at the same time. I hit different spots and with different intensities. I'll play cross-stick with my left hand on the snare while muting the head with my palm, and I'll play on the remaining surface of the head at the same time with my right hand. It gives me that clack-clack-clack sound, like a danzon. I studied Latin timbales, which is where they do that.

MD: When drummers join Pat Metheny's group, it typically seems that their cymbal arsenal expands.

Antonio: Pat has a thing for flat rides. He thinks sonically that the guitar gets lost when you have too many overtones on the cymbals. But the flat rides give you a lot of definition without too many overtones. Zildjian made some great cymbals for me. Even on slow tempos I'm sometimes playing double-time on the ride cymbal, so a cymbal that provides definition without too many overtones prevents it from becoming messy.

MD: You get so much sound and drive out of the cymbals. You seem to use a whipping motion when you crash.

Antonio: I was checking out Elvin Jones a lot and the way he would play the ride. His grip was so loose and he would get such a big sound. I started realizing that the less contact between the stick and my hand, the more sound I would get out of the cymbals. Sometimes when I hit the cymbal I almost let go of the stick. I just hold it enough so I won't lose it. I open my hand a lot to release the stick. That gives me a much bigger cymbal sound.

MD: When you're playing straight-ahead, as with guitarist Adam Rogers or your own trio, at times there's still a Latin edge, a hardness to your cymbal sound.

Antonio: I didn't grow up playing jazz; I played a lot of rock. I can't deny some parts of my personality. That makes me different. A lot of drummers are just clones of other people. I have rock, Latin, and swing influences, and when I play it all comes out.

MD: What's the key to getting that propulsive but seamless ride pattern flow?

Antonio: It comes from straight-ahead. And back in the day, I played a lot of fusion. I tried to get as many chops as I could, and eventually they turned into being musical. Playing those ride patterns came from the fusion chops and applying them to straight-ahead.

Scorching The Web Of Sound

MD: You play with incredible intensity at low dynamic levels. Is there a rule of thumb for that?

Antonio: I use mostly fingers. In the '90s I was touring with Danilo Perez in Europe and we were playing

these clubs with no amplification. And the clubs would have these old drums that I had to use. I really had to concentrate on getting the best sound I could. It was very hard. I had to train myself to hear what was going on in these very resonant halls. I had to survive, so I developed that very low-level dynamic way of playing.

MD: You seem to play all of your gigs with a very low-level intricacy, a real density on the kit. I wonder if that comes from your strong independence.

Antonio: I really worked on being able to give a different character to each limb. If I'm playing straight-ahead, I really concentrate on keeping my ride cymbal strong. Between the hi-hat, bass drum, and snare drum I can do many things at a much lower volume and then add accents to that. It's a combination of independence, technique, and touch, and being aware of what it's sounding like.

I think it's so important to concentrate on the overall sound you're getting out of the drums. So many drummers have really awful sound when they play. They have good chops, but the way they tune the drums, or where they hit the drums, or the cymbal sounds they have, are bad. Your sound is very important to the vibe you're bringing to the band.

Clave, Cross Rhythms, And Cross Meters

MD: Regarding the rim click and stick on the head, are there basic patterns, or is it a combination of flams?

Antonio: A lot of flams. I do a lot of doubles with the right hand and singles with the left. I want it to sound loose and organic. When it's just on the edge of falling apart, I return to the beat. That gives it a sense of uncertainty for a second. Sometimes timbale and conga players phrase over the barline so that it feels like it's going to fall apart. Then they resolve it in a way that wraps things up.

Paul La Raia

It's fun to apply that looseness to other kinds of music.

MD: How do you describe the music of leaders like Miguel Zenon, Avi Lebovich, and Avishai Cohen?

Antonio: It's Latin influenced, what you could call fusion. Very acoustic, very organic, and loose, but it has many elements from many different places. And the arrangements are so hard that in order to make them flow everybody has to be focused and playing at the highest level.

MD: Are you reading on those sessions?

Antonio: Oh, yeah. Let me show you a Miguel Zenon chart for his next record. [*Antonio brings out a chart that is five pages long and filled with notes rising and falling over the staff.*] This goes by very fast. The whole drum pattern is written out. It's two different patterns of 4/4, two of 2/2, and one of 5/4. [*Sings complicated, fast line.*] That just keeps on going. Miguel has done extensive research on traditional Puerto Rican music and has transformed the whole thing. It is so challenging.

MD: On the title track of Avi Lebovich's *Constant Chase* CD, it sounds like the rhythm is constantly being cut in half. It's disorienting.

Antonio: We were playing a drum 'n' bass–like groove, which may be in fifteen or thirteen. But every time the chorus goes by we slow it down, by ear—just a little bit every time. We played it a lot and figured out where to slow it down. There is no metric modulation. We're just going by feel.

Avi Lebovich and Avishai Cohen are from Israel, so their music has that Middle Eastern flavor. But they also love Latin music. I think the future of music lies in the combination of different kinds. When you mix jazz with anything else, it becomes this new thing. And when you mix ethnic rhythms into jazz, it keeps evolving. I've been lucky enough to be in the middle of all of this. I've been able to infuse my drumming into all of these kinds of music. That's what I love.

MD: Do you ever play literal ethnic rhythms?

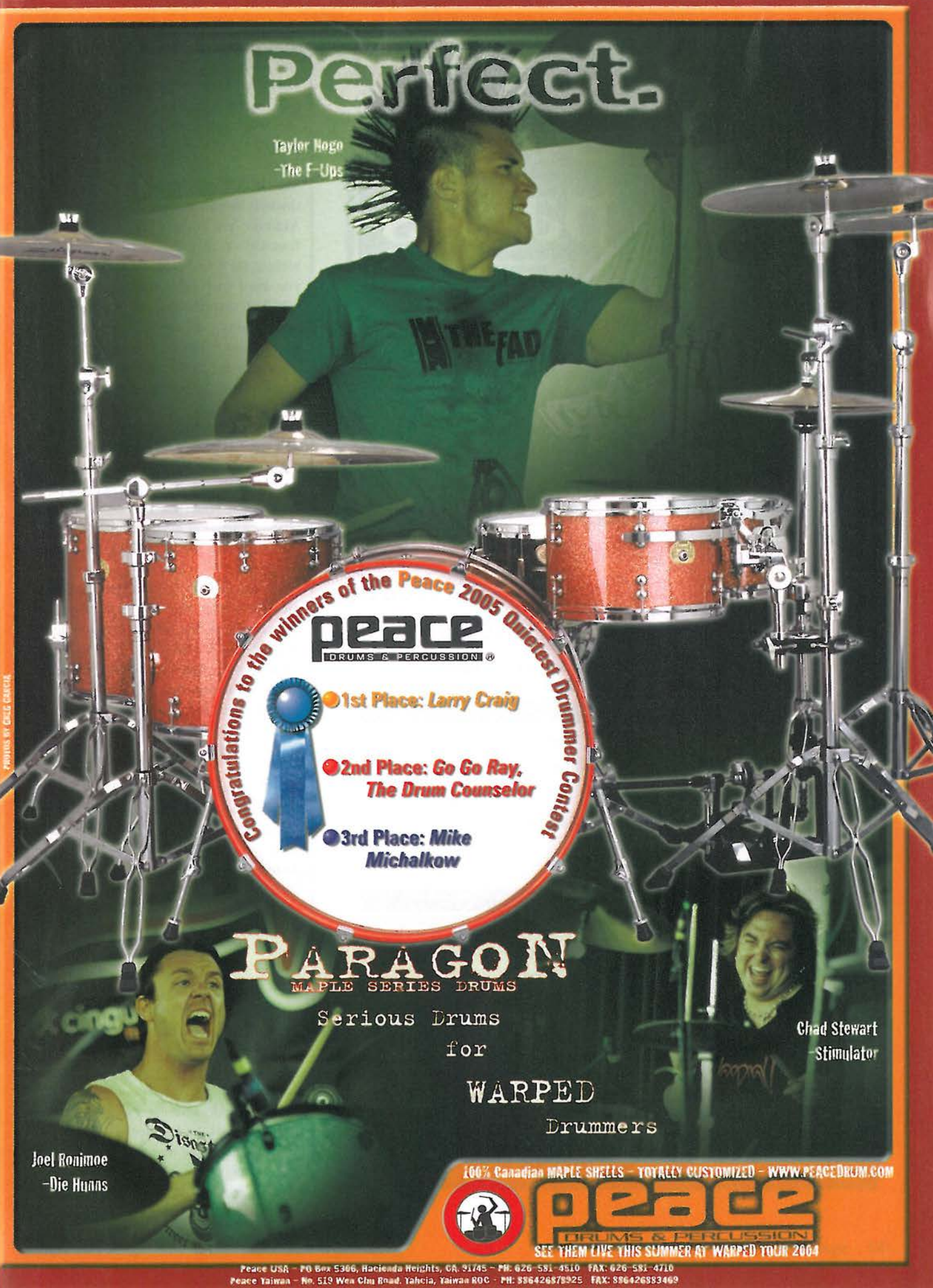
Antonio: I break them up. I start with a literal rhythm, like with David Sanchez I had to learn how to play bomba and plena, which are traditional Puerto Rican rhythms. But once I understood the rhythms, I thought, Forget about the rhythm, play jazz. But I still think about the rhythm. It's the same thing with Afro-Cuban. I know the rhythms, but I don't want to play them. I know that my patterns are in clave and they are correct, but I break them down so much because I want them to feel a lot more open.

MD: So when somebody puts a piece of music in front of you, you know how far you can take it.

Antonio: And it depends who I'm playing with. People like Miguel Zenon, David Sanchez, John Patitucci, Danilo Perez; they don't want the literal rhythms. They know all that stuff, but it's more jazz and more open. Pat Metheny, Charlie Haden, and Michael Brecker are coming from a different place. But if there is a Latin flavor in their music, I grab from what I know is authentic and break it down and make it fit the song. You have to know the language.

MD: It seems the most interesting contemporary jazz is fusing rhythms from Latin America and the Middle East.

Antonio: It's undeniable that the music is heading that way. There are musicians from so many different countries living in New York, and what we all have in common is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jazz. Everybody brings their own thing to the table. I grew up in Mexico with Latin music, rock, mariachi, and jazz—it's all a part of me. You cannot deny jazz's possibility for growth when it combines with other kinds of music.

MD: Is mastering all of these various rhythms like assembling building blocks?

Antonio: Yes. A lot of people don't have the foundation; they just want to aim higher without the foundation. How can you talk if you don't know your ABCs? You'll just be babbling, and that's what a lot of people do on the drums. It's very important that you have a concept before you play.

One of my main things now is motif development. No matter what kind of music, I want to be able to tell stories when I play. I want to grab a motif and develop it as much as I can, whether I'm comping or soloing. That motif can be anything. Develop it, switch it around, go to another motif, and then return. When you do that, it gives your playing a sense of organization. Otherwise it can sound like you're rambling, just playing by reflex.

For me, this all comes from playing with musicians who play that way. Metheny is incredibly melodic; Brecker is the same way, Miguel and David too. These guys have made it very clear to me that even though their instruments are melodic, I can apply that thinking to a rhythmic concept. By doing that I've become more melodic on the drums as well.

Finding The Way Up

MD: Metheny stated that he wrote the opening track to *The Way Up* around your drumming.

Antonio: We went into the studio in January of '03 and Pat had me play a bunch of different rhythms. I played stuff that resembled 6/8, drum 'n' bass, straight ahead, etc. to a click at different tempos, improvising and fooling around with the beats all by myself. Then he and Lyle Mays wrote to the grooves I played. In April I relearned the parts and hits that I had played; I had to revisit all of that and reinvent most of the grooves. There was no rehearsal. We just went straight into the studio.

Pat and Lyle gave the rest of us a bible of charts that we had to decipher. We would play the chart once we had an idea of what it was. We would record it, listen to it, make changes, record it again, and then sleep on it.

Heavyweights On Antonio

Michael Brecker (sax great)

Every band desires a drummer who can be supportive and also lead the ensemble on the bandstand. Antonio beautifully fills that role. It's so easy and natural to play music with him. His connected sense of time and elegant touch, combined with blistering fire and originality, make for fantastic explorations in music.

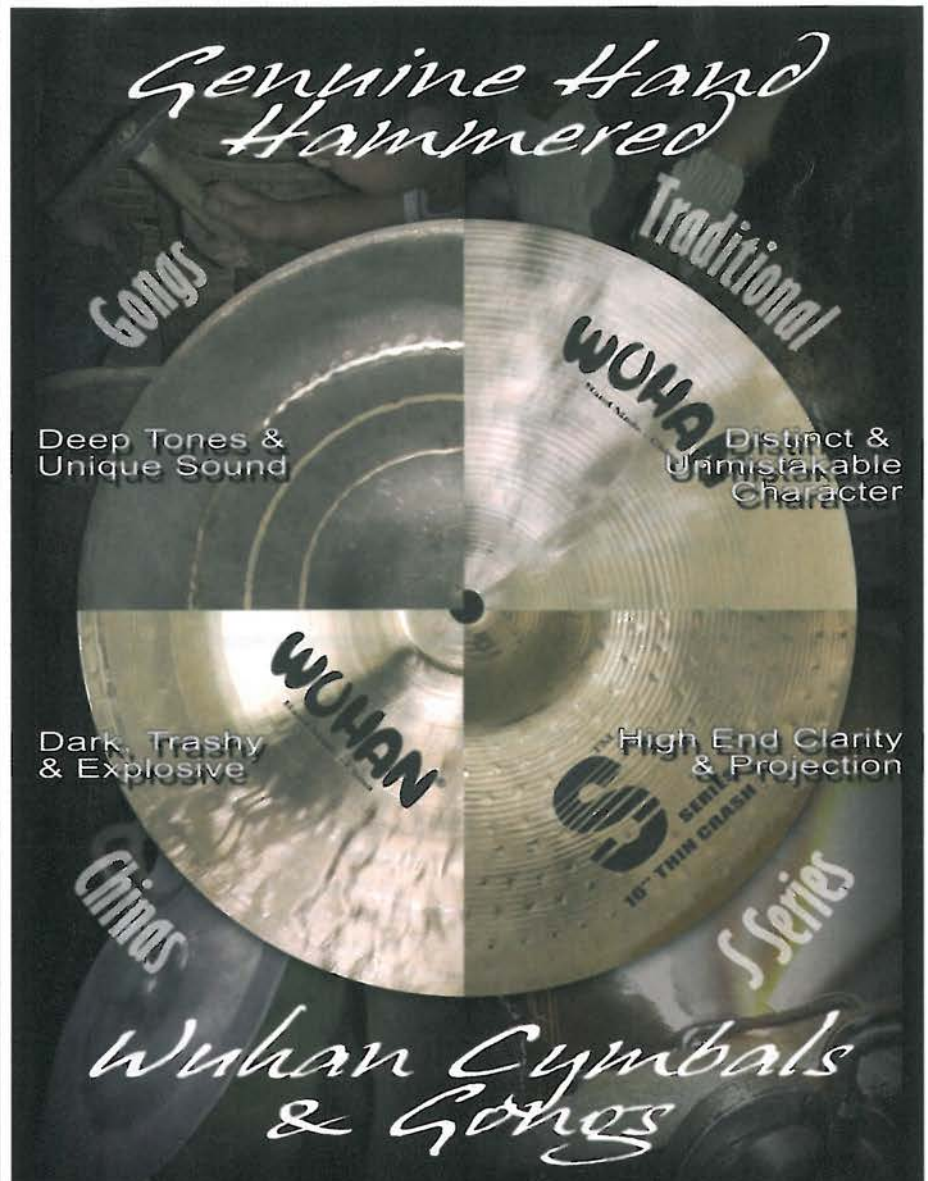
With Antonio at the helm, there's never any guesswork about the time. He has an individual, clear sound on the drums, blending superbly in any live or studio situation. He can improvise in the moment, so I love playing duets with him. It feels like he's in my head!

Antonio has ferocious technique, but never uses it superfluously or mechanically. He brings his own personal style to any musical genre. Finally, Antonio's warmth and sublime musicality inspire trust, which is the most important ingredient for making truly spontaneous music.

Pat Metheny (guitar giant)

The thing that impressed me the most when I first heard Antonio—he was playing in a trio with Danilo Perez—was how soft he could play and still keep it absolutely burning. The only other drummer I've ever played with that had that same kind of intense but low burn was Billy Higgins. And in fact, my first impression of Antonio was that he was an introspective kind of drummer. But that first impression only lasted about five minutes, because just a few minutes later it sounded to me that Danilo had added two or three percussionists to the band—and it was all Antonio! And that was burning too.

It wasn't until the third or fourth time that Antonio and I played together that I realized he also had this totally unbelievable technical facility—chops that I feel rival just about anyone in history. He just hadn't displayed it with the music we were playing. And *that* is what makes Antonio so great. His maturity, his musical vision, and his amazing aptitude to see the whole musical picture that's going on *beyond* the drumset itself is tremendous. Antonio's presence in the group represents one of the most significant changes in the band's twenty-eight-year history.



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Antonio Sanchez

Then we recorded it again the next morning.

MD: Did you use a click?

Antonio: Yes. The cool thing about how we use it is that, to make it more "human," we usually make the click speed up a few notches on the sections when the energy makes you want to push the time a little. We sort of design it to "follow" us more than us following it. But it's very gradual, sometimes throughout the whole tune, so it doesn't feel arbitrary when it happens. We play the tunes a few times and [bassist] Steve Rodby and I usually can feel the sections where the click is holding us back. That's when we speed those up a little until we find the right tempo for each tune.

MD: *The Way Up* is a real departure for Metheny.

Antonio: All of the parts have a twist, stuff that you can't identify as hard but that actually is. There are tons of meter changes all over the place: 6/8, 5/4, 7/8, 9/8, all crammed together. I like that it comes around and you don't even notice it. I don't like when the meter is obvious. With Pat you can't tell if it's an odd meter because the melody is so logical. Your ear follows that, not what's happening below. The opening phrase is basically in four, with a 6/8 feel over it the whole time. But it's easier to think of it in four.

MD: How did you find your own sound within the group?

Antonio: The group has developed its own syntax over the years. My main concern was how I could sound like myself and play the PMG language. I was concerned about playing what I thought they wanted to hear. But I stopped being so afraid, and Pat got used to my sound and let me get loose when I wanted to. I really listened to the old stuff and tried to see what the parameters of the music were. I wanted to do my thing but within those parameters.

MD: Was their a learning curve to tackle?

Antonio: Physically, I wasn't ready for the level of endurance required for this gig. On the last tour, the gigs were three hours and forty minutes long, with no breaks. After a week my arms started to hurt. I told Pat I didn't know if I could keep up. Then we brought it down to three hours and fifteen minutes.

Metheny is a conceptual genius. He is *so* clear in what he wants from the music. The songs have to do very specific things. They have to move very logically, so if

you don't plan your dynamics really well, if you get there before you're supposed to, there's nowhere else to go and the song is screwed. If you're late, the buildup will be way too fast. It has to be extremely gradual and seamless for the songs to do what they have to do. That is really, really hard.

MD: You've attended the National Conservatory in Mexico, Berklee, and the New England Conservatory. Is your training essential to working with Pat Metheny?

Antonio: I don't know if it's essential, but it has helped so much just to understand the compositions and the forms. That's something drummers often overlook. You can easily tell if a drummer knows the form of a song. If you play jazz, you have to know so much about harmony and form to get around the tune. That's helped me a lot.

The Gymnast Inside

MD: How do you maintain your technique?

Antonio: I play so often that my chops are okay. I would like to improve on them, but I'm so caught up with music and trying to play as musically as I can that I think the chops are secondary. Now I practice music that I know I'm going to have to play. I become like a surgeon with it and see what all my possibilities are.

In the past I did a lot of work on a practice pad. Many people rely on the rebound of the practice pad. I would play the practice pad in the middle of the bed; I'd practice all the rudiments, alternating between the practice pad and the surface of the bed, playing the same thing on both surfaces. That way I wasn't able to rely on the rebound and had to make the stick work with my own hands. Every drum and cymbal on the kit has a different type of rebound. That way you know you'll make it happen no matter what you're hitting.

MD: Do you have a warm-up routine?

Antonio: It's hardcore. I didn't use to warm up with Metheny, but then I started getting injured. I used to be a gymnast; I was in Mexico's national team when I was in my twenties. I would sit down and really stretch every part of my body, so I understand how important it is. I especially stretch my hands now, stretching the fingers so my muscles are ready.

I like the feeling of freshness when I sit on the drums, so I don't like to play the drums earlier in the day before a gig. I love to sit down for the first time at the gig and experience the freshness and the feel of the sticks and the sound of the drums.

To Thine Own (Drumming) Self Be True

MD: What do you say to all those drummers who want to come to New York and take your gigs?

Antonio: Don't come! [laughs] Actually, they need to be overprepared. They also need to have the greatest attitude in the world and have the desire to keep on improving. You also have to be super professional and responsible.

There are a lot of great musicians in New York that for some reason never got to where you think they should be. It can be an attitude problem. Other people, you *know* they're going to get there. They're all for the music and they're positive. With that recipe, it will be hard *not* to make a living playing music.

Don't deny yourself. You have to come out in the music somehow. You grew up in some neighborhood and you listened to music and played some music. All of that should come out in your playing. Don't deny your influences. Don't deny the uniqueness of who *you* are.

Be sure to go to www.antoniosanchez.net for Antonio's latest activities. And visit www.moderndrummer.com for details on how you can win a set of Antonio Sanchez's Evans drumheads.

A Sampling Of Sanchez

Artist	Album
Pat Metheny Group	The Way Up
Pat Metheny Group	Speaking Of Now
Pat Metheny	Pat Metheny Trio Live (to be released fall 2005)
Michael Brecker	Wide Angles
David Sanchez	Travesia
David Sanchez	Melaza
Danilo Perez	Motherland
Miguel Zenon	Ceremonial
Miguel Zenon	Jibaro
Avishai Cohen	Unity

Favorites

Artist	Album	Drummer
Rush	Exit Stage Left	Neil Peart
The Police	all	Stewart Copeland
Miles Davis	My Funny Valentine	Tony Williams
Miles Davis	Four & More	Tony Williams
Chick Corea	Now He Sings, Now He Sobs	Roy Haynes
John Coltrane	A Love Supreme	Elvin Jones
Branford Marsalis	Crazy People Music	Jeff "Tain" Watts
George Garzone	Four's And Two's	Bill Stewart
Kenny Garrett	Black Hope	Brian Blade
Keith Jarrett	The Cure	Jack DeJohnette

Antonio's Suggested Latin Listening

Muñequitos de Matanzas
(traditional rumba, which is just chants and percussion)
Conjunto Clave y Guaguanco
Tito Puente's Top Percussion
"Oro Seco" recordings, which are bata drums used for Santeria
Eddie Palmieri
Batacumbele
Irakere

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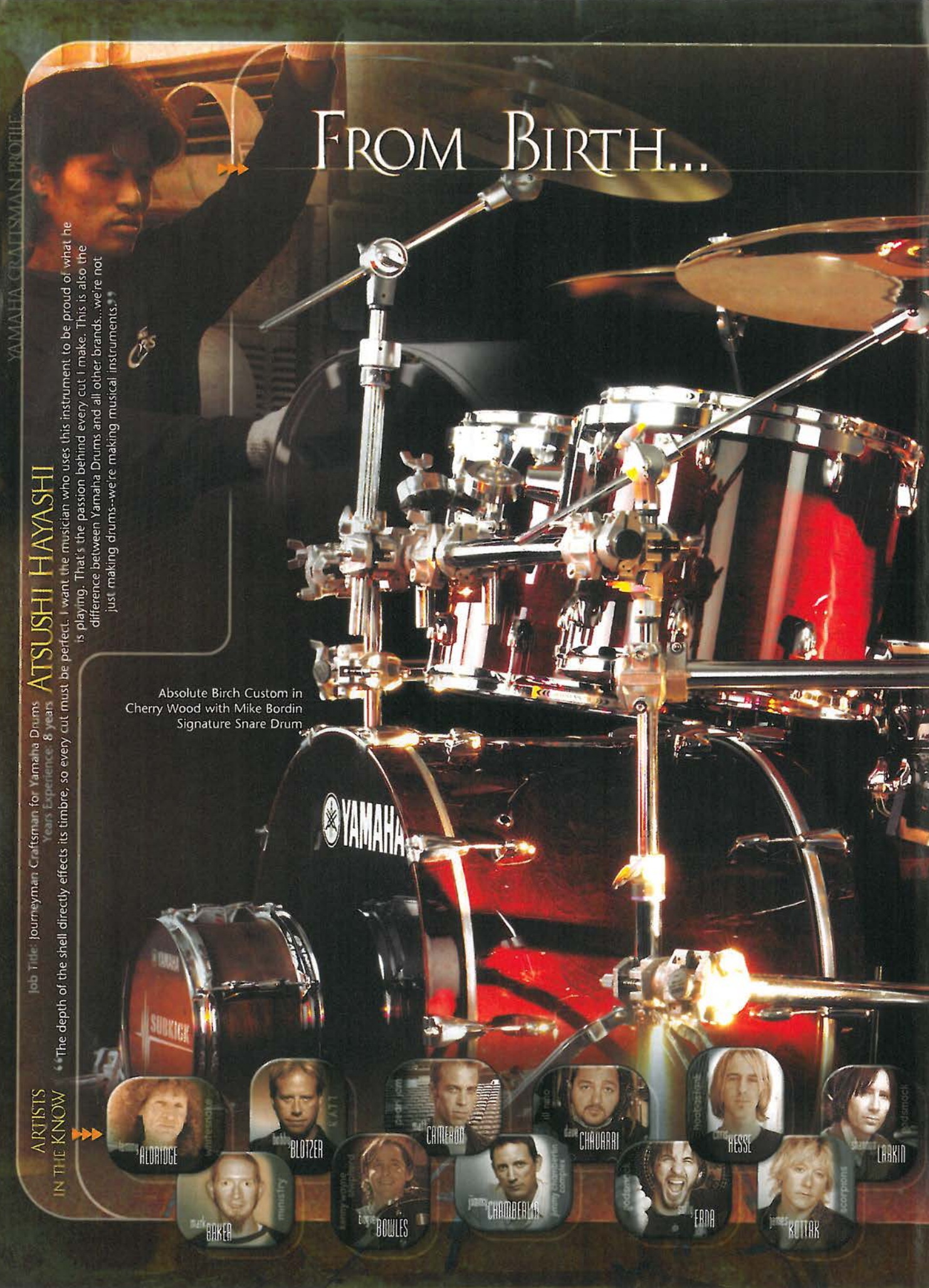

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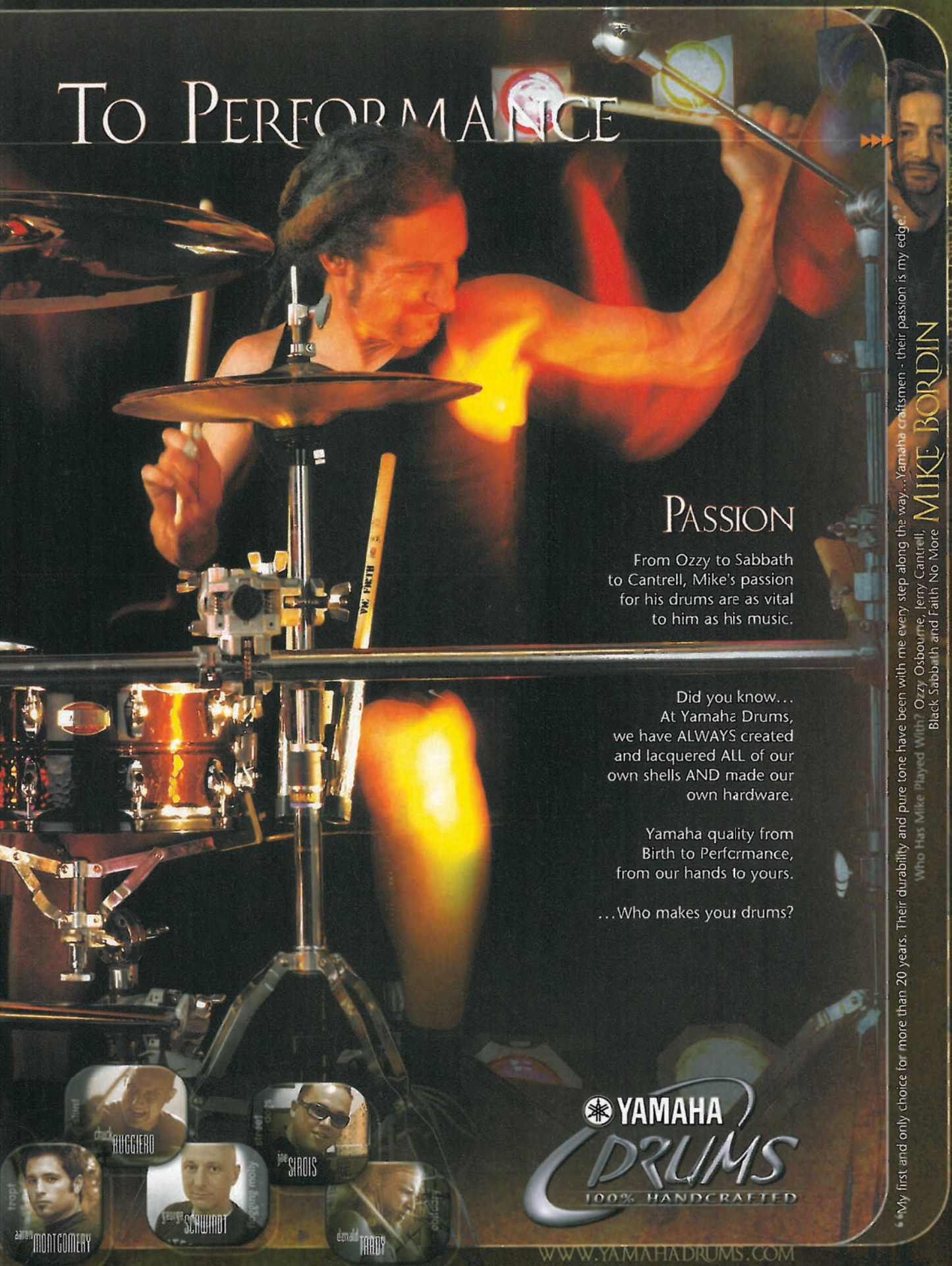

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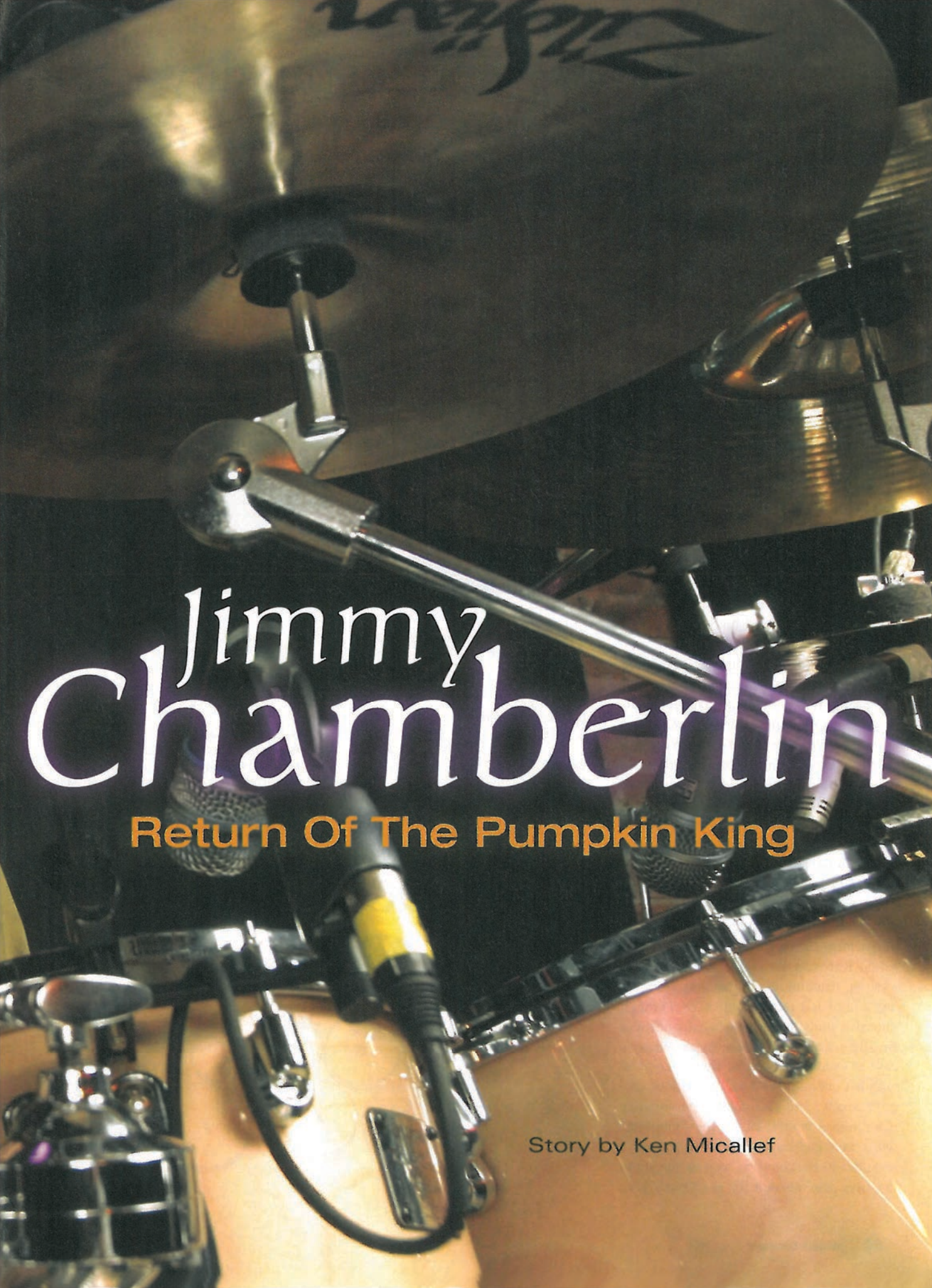


Jimmy Chamberlin

Return Of The Pumpkin King

Story by Ken Micallef

"I think that love and spirituality—and this cosmic vibration that runs through everybody—is a real thing."

So says drummer, bandleader, and budding cosmic guru Jimmy Chamberlin. "For me, music is a testament to the idea that if you acknowledge the vibrations going on around you, it's possible to reproduce that into an art form. This CD is an acknowledgement of the natural vibrations running through me. It was just a period of my life where I was able to channel those into music because I was given the freedom to do so."

Describing his long overdue debut as a leader from his home in Temecula, California, Jimmy Chamberlin talks like a man reborn. *Life Begins Again*, from his new band, The Jimmy Chamberlin Complex, is the next evolutionary step for one of rock's most successful musicians, one who has witnessed both massive success and miserable failure.

Renowned for the astounding, slamming rolls, complex set patterns, and flowing fireball energy that ignited such platinum-selling Smashing Pumpkins albums as *Gish* and *Mellon Collie And The Infinite Sadness*, Jimmy Chamberlin is that rare drummer who matches prog rock and jazz mastery to the commercial demands of arena rock. Along with Nirvana and Pearl Jam, Smashing Pumpkins ruled the alt rock genre in the 1990s, the band's grandiose arrangements and ethereal melodies capturing the imaginations (and dollars) of millions.

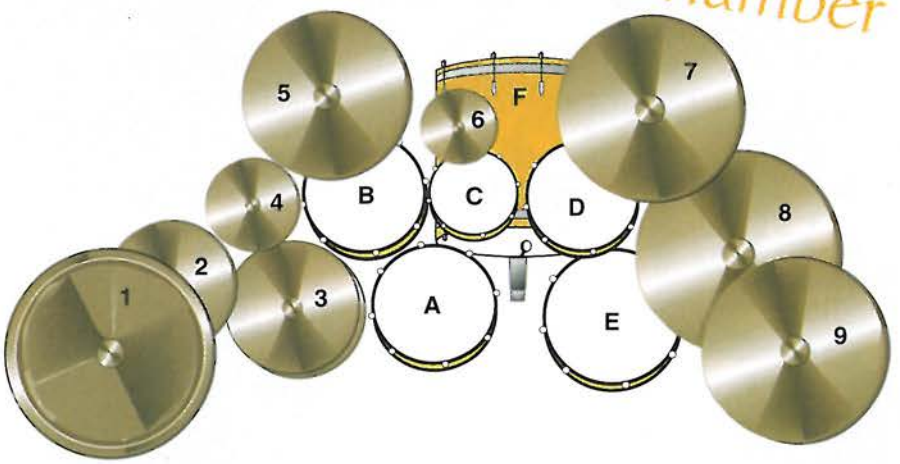
A professional by the age of fourteen performing with Chicago's prestigious Eddie Karosa's Polka Party, Chamberlin grew up listening to and learning from his dad's big band record collection. Through intensive study, he became equally adept at Brazilian, Latin, and fusion styles. Jimmy's ease at executing difficult figures coupled with his attention to detail, infectious creative spark, and risk-taking personality made him a natural fit for the Pumpkins, where he could be counted on to provide a rock-steady backbone as well as the sticking fireworks needed for the band's gos-

Drums: Yamaha Birch Custom Absolute
- **A.** 5½x14 Jimmy Chamberlin model snare
- **B.** 12x14 tom
- **C.** 8x10 tom
- **D.** 9x13 tom
- **E.** 16x16 floor tom
- **F.** 18x22 bass drum

Cymbals: Zildjian
1. 20" China Boy High
2. 14" A Custom crash
3. 15" A New Beat hi-hats
4. 10" A Custom splash
5. 18" A Custom crash
6. 8" A Custom splash, or 12" K Custom Special Dry crash
7. 20" K Constantinople ride
8. 22" Swish Knocker with rivets
9. 19" Armand ride with rivets

Hardware: All Yamaha
Heads: Remo coated Ambassador on snare drum batter, Ambassador snare-side, clear Emperors on tops of toms with clear Ambassadors on bottoms, PowerStroke 3 on bass drum batter with Ambassador on front
Sticks: Vic Firth 5A

Chamberlin's Chamber



Andrew Lepley

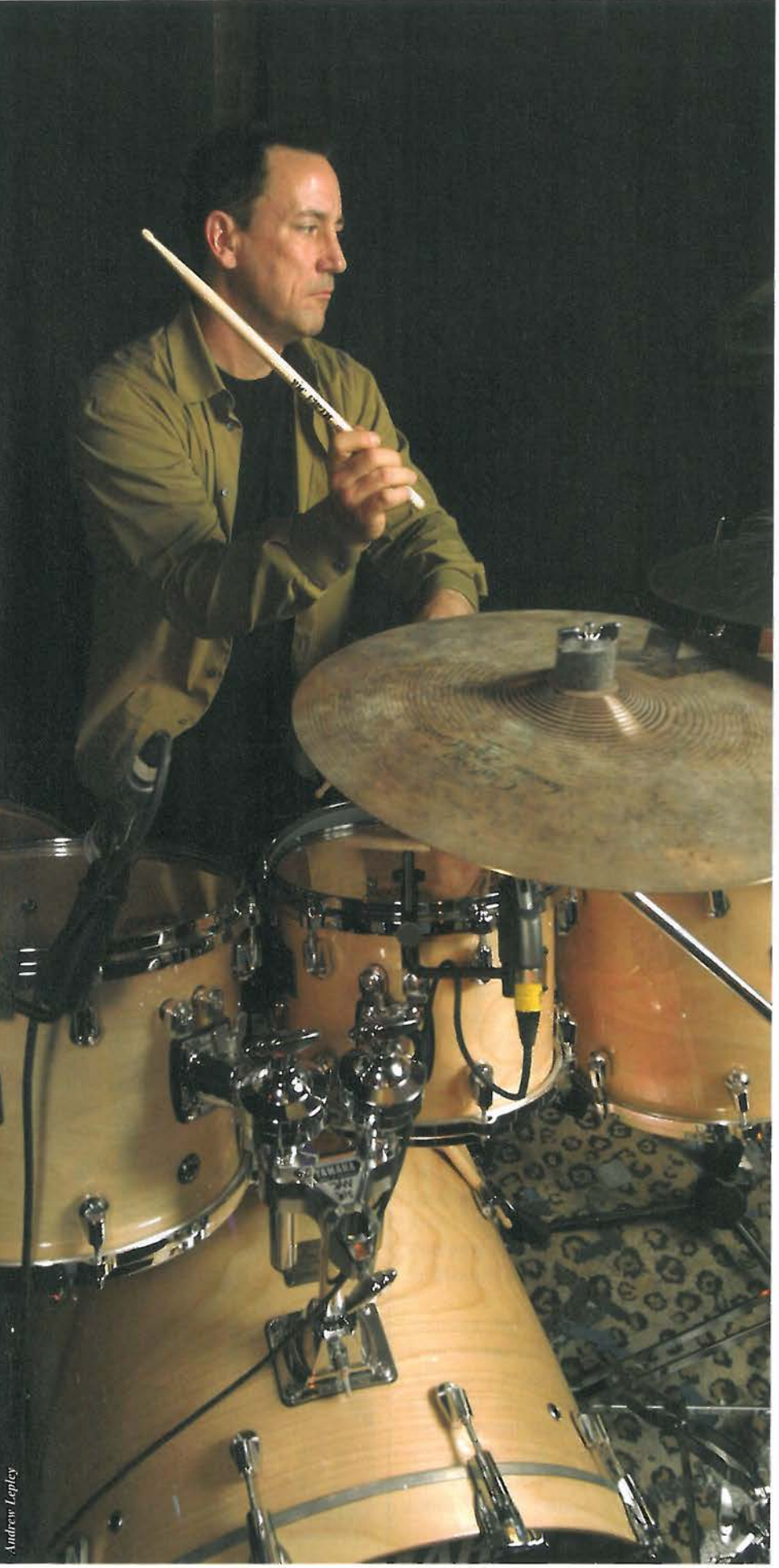
samer flights of fancy.

But with success comes responsibility, an area where Chamberlin was often not up to the task. Bouts with drug abuse dogged the drummer like a bad dream, culminating in the shared overdose and then death of Pumpkins touring keyboardist Mike Melvoin in 1996. Chamberlin was fired from the band shortly thereafter, and his showbiz obit seemed near.

But after rehab and much soul searching, Jimmy Chamberlin found his way back. In late 1996, he joined with members of Skid Row and The Breeders for the album *Last Hard Men*. By 1999 he had returned to The Pumpkins for *MACHINA/The Machines Of God*. Later Chamberlin would join Pumpkins leader Billy Corgan in the exceptional Zwan.

Life Begins Again is not quite the album Jimmy has always threatened to make. Drummers hoping for an all Chamberlin display of drumming excess will not be dismayed, but The Jimmy Chamberlin Complex is much more than that. With a cast of crack LA musicians and vocals from Corgan, ex-Catherine Wheel vocalist Rob Dickinson, and Righteous Brothers legend Bill Medley, *Life Begins Again* walks an unusual tightrope between muscle-baring displays of instrumental prowess and lushly melodic songs (with Chamberlin-penned lyrics) that wouldn't be out of place on, well, a Smashing Pumpkins record.

Chamberlin sounds revived, excited, enthusiastic, and powerful throughout eleven tracks of supercharged pop-prog. Drum solos appear on two tracks, while the entire album is a feast of odd meters, texturally imagistic grooves, delicate cymbal work, and fills that are so immense and compressed they sound like Arnold Schwarzenegger has entered the building.



Andrew Lepley

Beyond the drumming, even beyond the music, Jimmy Chamberlin sounds like a man who finally has his priorities straight. With a new home and a new baby no doubt influencing its making, *Life Begins Again* chronicles a musician whose conviction, talent, and attitude are a model for anyone hoping to make a career in the mad music business.

MD: The Jimmy Chamberlin Complex is unusual in that it has an instrumental prog rock edge but also strong compositions. How did you merge the two?

Jimmy: By not second-guessing anything. I used my intuition to key in on the things that sounded good, and I didn't overrehearse or think, Oh, this song doesn't have enough changes, or This isn't prog because it doesn't have a 7/4 bar. It was more like, This feels good. Let's exploit it.

MD: The album is loosely prog rock, but the *sound* of the record is occasionally reminiscent of Bill Connors' first record, *Step It*, with Dave Weckl. *Life Begins Again* has a similar guitar sound and openness of groove.

Jimmy: We only had twenty grand to make the record. We wrote and rehearsed for almost twenty-five days and recorded it in ten—a little under forty days from start to finish. We recorded at this small studio in Pasadena called Lawnmower. The studio closed down after we left, but they had a Neve board and a really nice drum room, a brick garage that was formerly a real lawnmower repair shop. Its sound really complemented the Yamaha Birch Absolutes that I used on the record.

MD: Why did you title the album *Life Begins Again*?

Jimmy: That's what it is, another cycle for me musically. And certainly I look at this musical endeavor as another part of life. It's a new beginning for me—moving to California, my wife and I just had a baby, a lot of new things happening. I never thought I would move to the West Coast. But I've made changes in my life due to music, and that's the reason for the title: *Life Begins Again,* courtesy of my musical career.

MD: Had you thought about a solo album for a long time?

Jimmy: It was strange. I was just sitting around in Chicago doing clinics here and there, and I was about to do a drum sample

CD for Sony. I wasn't doing anything, really. I was talking with Billy Corgan and he said, "Why don't you do your solo record?" I'd always talked about doing this kind of prog-rock jazz masterpiece with Billy Mohler on bass and Mike Garson on piano, but Billy lit the fire. I said, "I would be into it, but I don't think anybody else will be."

Billy sent out some emails, and the next thing you know, during Christmas 2003 I got a call from Sanctuary Records saying they were into The Complex. I liked it because they said there would be no parameters and I could do whatever I wanted. It wouldn't be judged on a pop-rock yardstick. "We don't care if it sells anything," they said. "We just want to be behind it." I flew to New York and we negotiated a deal.

MD: Was it hard to negotiate the record?

Jimmy: I was negotiating from February to May, just because there's a lot of baggage in signing me to a contract because I have a past. People want obligations to The Smashing Pumpkins, blah, blah, blah. When we finally got it done, I flew to LA in May.

Mohler and I spent the whole month rehearsing. Mohler was supposed to do Lollapalooza on July 3, so we had a deadline to meet. Then Lollapalooza got cancelled, so we didn't have to worry about it. But we literally had forty-five days to get the album done. It really forced us to work twelve-hour days. If we had all year to get the album done, would it have been finished by now? I don't even know. With a tight deadline, you find yourself not having the luxury of second-guessing yourself. You go on intuition.

MD: What determined the album's direction?

Jimmy: Mohler and I came up with a few ideas. And I got together with Mike Garson and we worked up a 6/8 version of "Nardis" and some other Bill Evans–type stuff. But when it came down to it, the jazz prog thing really wasn't that exciting to me. It was like something a little kid would do, a kid in a candy store who can make a super self-indulgent record. I shit-canned that idea and sequestered myself with Mohler, who is a great songwriter, and we started writing songs that were fun to play.

Jimmy's Jazz And Rock Masters

Recordings

Artist	Album
Jimmy Chamberlin Complex	Life Begins Again
Smashing Pumpkins	Gish
Smashing Pumpkins	Siamese Dream
Smashing Pumpkins	Mellon Collie And The Infinite Sadness
Smashing Pumpkins	The Aeroplane Flies High
Smashing Pumpkins	Machina
Smashing Pumpkins	Machina II
Smashing Pumpkins	Pisces Iscariot
Zwan	Mary Star Of The Sea

Faves

Artist	Album	Drummer
Tony Williams Lifetime	Believe It	Tony Williams
McCoy Tyner	The Real McCoy	Elvin Jones
Jeff Beck	Blow By Blow	Richard Bailey
Jeff Beck	Wired	Richard Bailey, Ed Greene, Narada Michael Walden
Jeff Beck	Rough And Ready	Cozy Powell
Brand X	Unorthodox Behavior	Phil Collins
Return To Forever	Light As A Feather	Airto Moreira
Deep Purple	Fireball	Ian Paice
Deep Purple	Machine Head	Ian Paice
Deep Purple	Burn	Ian Paice
Benny Goodman	This Is Benny Goodman	Gene Krupa
Duke Ellington	any	Sonny Greer
Led Zeppelin	any	John Bonham
Buddy Rich	any	Buddy Rich

Andrew Lepley

MD: Was there a model record that outlined what you wanted to do?

Jimmy: When I first started writing and people asked what it sounded like, I said it sounded like Return To Forever meets The Cure. That was where my headspace was. I wanted to make something with the intensity of the first Return To Forever or Mahavishnu Orchestra records but something that people could latch onto and not have to sit there counting to thirteen over and over to enjoy the tune.

MD: On your Web site you said that you wanted to make an "anti Pro Tools record."

Jimmy: The goal was to capture the energy and honesty of the music. The music is not some preassembled factory job. It's totally intuitive music that comes from the heart. I wanted to get that spontaneity on tape and not sit there and jack around with arrangements and computerize everything. Basically all the drum performances are one or two takes, and the bass and guitar is live. It's people playing their instruments, which is something you don't really hear on the radio.

MD: No Pro Tools? No click tracks?

Jimmy: We did use a click track for the pop songs "Life Begins Again" and "Love Is Real," but that's about it.

MD: Did you record live to hard disc? That's kind of radical these days.

Jimmy: I know. It ended up being twenty-five days rehearsing, six to twelve hours a day, and just getting in the groove and picking the right moment to push the record button.

MD: What do you write on?

Jimmy: We wrote on guitar and bass. Mohler and I would demo the songs, then rework the arrangements based on that. We didn't have a band until we got to the studio. Shawn Woolstenhulme played these sparse rhythm guitar parts over the tracks and then overdubbed the leads. We rehearsed in the studio with Shawn and Adam Benjamin, who played Fender Rhodes, and then we recorded live. The parts were all good, but making songs out of parts is where the craft comes in.

MD: How did you maintain that line between adventurous instrumentals and melodic songs?

Jimmy: We could tell when someone was getting bored with a track, ourselves included. If it started sounding like the weather channel, we weren't about it. We were writing those prog-rock and modern-fusion jams at first. But we got really bored fast with those. It was more important to play good-quality songs than it was to play tons of solos.

MD: You have a unique position in the rock world, coming from a successful band that *encouraged* you to play. And I imagine it was a similar situation with Zwan. How did being in the leader's and writer's chair affect your drumming?

Jimmy: It really didn't. I think I'm able to separate those two roles pretty well. From a producer's standpoint, I did exactly what I know how to do. I've been around and have made huge records with The Pumpkins. I know how to get that sound and how to speed things up and move the process along. And I know what I had to do personally to get my sound up to snuff.

MD: How *did* you get your sound up to snuff?

Jimmy: Practice, practice, practice. I tend to get obsessive/compulsive about records

and start to eat, drink, and sleep them. I wasn't sleeping; I would sit up in bed going through song arrangements in my head. There's a lot to do. You would think that one thing would suffer, but if you're patient everything can come to the forefront. A lot of what you run into with production is just crowd control, keeping everybody happy and motivated, and not coming down on anybody.

MD: How have you developed your very recognizable drumming style?

Jimmy: My sound has been a natural evolution. Certainly my cracking snare sound harkens back to the John Bonham meets Buddy Rich sound. Speaking of snare sound, I used my Yamaha signature snare on the record. It sums up all the snares I have...I'm ready to get rid of my fifty Ludwig Black Beauties! The Yamaha is a steel shell with die-cast hoops, with the lugs attached directly to the steel shells, with no rubber grommet muffling. There's no gasket between the lugs and the shell, so you can utilize all the metal for ring. It's loud and it has a lot of notes in it.

I used to do records with six or seven snare drums, but this is the first record where I used the same drum all the way through. Obviously I'm tooting my own horn, but I think it's the best snare drum that Yamaha makes—just kidding!

MD: If you know what you want to hear, more power to you.

Jimmy: You can spend a lot of time not getting the sound you want. You can spend a lot of time in the studio and still not be happy. I've been there. I usually play maple drums, but for this record I wanted the drums to have more attack. So we found a brick room and we used a birch kit. You can hear a little more stick sound from the drums. There's more fast playing than I would do on a Pumpkins record or when I play somebody else's songs, which I think worked on these drums.

MD: So how did your signature style evolve?

Jimmy: That's every musician's goal. The point of playing an instrument is to have your personality come to the forefront in kind of this beautiful vehicle. It's as simple as noticing the difference between a Renoir and a Rembrandt. As you get older and you start to master your instrument, what you start to strive for is identity.

My favorite drummers are instantly recognizable. How many notes does it take to tell if it's Elvin Jones or Tony Williams? That to me is success. If you want to spend your life sounding like somebody else, to me, that's a big waste of time. One of Buddy Rich's best quotes ever was, "The best musicians are thieves that never get caught." When you can take a little bit from Elvin and a bit from Tony and make it your own, well, that's a home run.

MD: Is that what you did?

Jimmy: Absolutely. If you want to succeed at something, align yourself with the best in the business and do exactly what they do. And certainly, you pick your environments as well. If you're striving for the creative forefront and you're in a band that only plays 2 and 4, you may need to find a different vehicle in which to create your art.

MD: Were there points in your evolution when you said, "I won't play that lick anymore"?

Jimmy: It never got that specific. I don't think you're supposed to take that much. When I say Elvin Jones, what I learned from him was how to embrace other musicians. I'm not claiming to play like Elvin Jones; that would be ridiculous. Nobody can do that. But the love that he gave to everybody that he played with and the respect he gave the musicians was part of his forte. He was a great listener.

MD: Were the fusion players part of your drum education?

Jimmy: Of course. Billy Cobham's *Spectrum*, Mahavishnu Orchestra's *Inner Mounting Flame*—those were huge for me, as were Airto's records, Santana's *Borboletta*, the first Return To Forever record, and anything with Peter Erskine, who is a dear friend of mine now. He's one of my biggest influences.

MD: The fills on *The Jimmy Chamberlin Complex* sound like a steamroller. You have so much power and articulation. Were power exercises or playing high off the head part of your practice routine?

Jimmy: Oh yeah, totally. If you're striving to play like that, you have to practice every day. I was engrossed in George Lawrence Stone's *Stick Control* on a daily basis when I was working up to this record. That book has been my bible through the years. If you want to play snare drum and you want that type of sound, you've got to go through *Stick Control*. For the last ten years, before

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every gig I play, I warm up with the first two pages of that book.

MD: How do you practice *Stick Control*?

Jimmy: Just running it down at different tempos. I struggle a little bit with the slower tempos, so I tend to work on those; I stay around quarter note equals 95 or 98. I also do a lot of stretching and watch what I eat. And I take vitamins: calcium, magnesium.

MD: You take vitamins for your drumming?

Jimmy: Sure. Drumming is athletic. You've got to stretch, you've got to watch what you do with your hands. You can't play baseball one day and expect to play drums the next. You'll be stiff. And you have to stay healthy. It takes a lot of power to move the sticks correctly and not be moving them with your elbows. That power has to come from your fingertips. The blood has to flow from your heart straight to your fingertips. It can't get stopped at your elbow and have you trying to force it down to your wrist.

MD: You've given this a lot of thought.

Jimmy: I do think about it, and my wife has helped me a lot. She's into yoga. Working on your breathing is good. Sometimes if I'm feeling a cramp, I envision the blood coming out of my heart and the red blood going to the cramp and bringing out the blue blood—in with the good, out with the bad. And I do a lot of breathing techniques when I stretch as well. You've got to be in tune with your body when you have four days to record an album. I've always known that warming up is important. When you tour as much as I have, you know what it's like to play when it's cold outside and you're not warmed up. It's painful. You can hurt yourself.

MD: Speaking about that kind of visualization, have you always thought that way about your body?

Jimmy: That's more of a recent development. I got into that about six years ago through a spiritual healer, acupuncturist, and chiropractor named Howard Resnik in Chicago. He's also worked on Vinnie Colaiuta and some of the drummers with Cirque du Soleil. He's a good, Zen, homeopathic guy. Healing comes from inside.

MD: How did you woodshed for the record?

Jimmy: I went back and played to a lot of different records—Peter Gabriel, Michael Jackson, old Quincy Jones, Temptations, and more progressive stuff like Brand X with Phil Collins on *Unorthodox Behavior*, which is one of my all-time favorite prog-rock records.

Part of my preparation for a record entailed a lot of listening, including things like The Mingus Big Band and Thelonious Monk. If you want to talk about instrumental songs that don't get boring, listen to Monk. And I watched Dave Weckl's first video a couple of times. That covers a lot of fundamentals. I talked to Peter Erskine, too. He's fun to talk to; he's just good energy.

MD: You mentioned your snare drum sound. How did you develop your touch on the kit?

Jimmy: I'm a traditional coated Ambassador guy on the snare. I think the snare drum is the most expressive drum that you have. There are thousands of different notes you can get from it—where you place the stick, where the rimshot lands, how high on the shoulder the stick hits the rim—those are all really important things to be exact about.

When I practice *Stick Control,* I apply it to the drum with rimshots and different sounds from different places on the head. I really try to concentrate on doing that precisely so that when I go for it, it won't sound off or honky. Playing the snare drum is very intuitive. It's something that my body is so familiar with that it's like an old buddy.

MD: Does that attitude also relate to your approach to the toms? You get a broad range of sound from the toms, and you seem to tune pretty widely top to bottom.

Jimmy: I take the same approach, but obviously, the toms are a little more forgiving. I'm a big fan of rimshots on the floor tom. If you're doing rolls and you go to flams on the floor tom, play off the rims to get that kind of Airto, flammy sound. That really gives dynamics to drumming.

If you're on the toms, you can either sound like a drum machine or you can sound like you're playing music. When you're on and off the rims and doing flams, that's part of the music. A lot of drummers don't do that. When they see the tom, they just try to hit it in the middle and whatever sound comes out is what they get. But there's as much to be said for a 10" tom as there is for a snare drum—you're on the rim, you can stretch the head, hold the head down with one stick and move the note up—I try everything with my drums. I've played for thirty-one years and I'm still experimenting.

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photo by Andrew Lepley

MD: Did you tune any differently for the new record?

Jimmy: I didn't, but I did switch heads. I usually use coated Remo Ambassadors, but instead I used clear Emperors for the record. They had a little more stick sound. And with the birch drums, they lent themselves to a little more density. The kit I used was one of Dave Weckl's.

MD: Regarding touch and tonality, do you smash your cymbals, glance them, or crash 'em?

Jimmy: I've been using those K Constantinople rides—the 20" medium thins. Elvin Jones had it right. He had three 20" cymbals and he could get pretty much every sound out of them. Stick placement when you're hitting the cymbal is really important. If you're dealing with an 18" crash and hitting it in conjunction with a snare drum, you strike it differently than if you're striking it along with the bass drum.

Jimmy with his post Smashing Pumpkins band, Zwan, featuring Billy Corgan and bassist Paz Lenchantin.

If I'm going for a downbeat crash, I tend to play with the shoulder of the stick. If I'm going for an accent crash, I play with the shoulder and the tip at the same time to get a little higher sound. Cymbals are wonderful things and not enough drummers spend enough time listening to them and learning where their tonal register fits in the song.

I'll use a different set of cymbals for every song. If we have a fast pop song, I'll come down two inches in my cymbal size because I want the crashes to be crisp. If you're doing something slow and heavy, you're going to want those 20" medium crashes to get that kind of Zeppelin ring, where the cymbal goes on and on.

MD: Were any of the album's songs built around a drum pattern?

Jimmy: The song that Billy Corgan sings on, "Lokicat," was actually written the day Elvin died. I was thinking of him while I was doing that song. That came about by Mohler playing the keyboard line and me just turning the snares off and zoning out and thinking about Elvin's passing and how important he was to drumming. He's responsible for the drumming of so many people.

MD: That is such a unique pattern with the tom rolls, the bell strike, and the double accent on the snare drum.

Jimmy: The tom part is the A part, a percussion part. The kick-snare-hat pattern is an overdub of my brother Paul playing. He's responsible for all of my left-hand hi-hat technique. We used to sit around and listen to Jeff Beck's *Blow By Blow* and *Wired,* and he taught me how to play "Scatterbrained." He really got me dialed in when I was a kid. So I wanted to give a little back.

MD: You play a drum solo in "PSA" and "Cranes Of Prey," blowing over the chord changes.

Jimmy: The concern in "Cranes" was how to play a drum solo over the standup bass solo. The model for that middle part was that Claus Ogerman/Bill Evans record, *Symbiosis*. One of the pieces on there is in three movements. There's an ascending string part that goes underneath the horn line and keeps overlapping. I thought it would be cool to do that and play off the drumset and make it real shimmery. I kept the ride cymbal humming and did the solo on all these small crashes and just threw in some snare hits every once in a while. "Cranes" is the one song that I wasn't into doing a solo on, but they convinced me.

MD: What was the approach for the brief solo at the end of "PSA"?

Jimmy: That was this weird part we had laying around. It didn't really go with anything. We had this staggered drum beat. I suggested Mohler play a part at the end, and we just went out and had some fun.

MD: Was "Owed To Darryl" built around that very floating and expansive drum beat?

Jimmy: Mohler wrote the chord progression when he was at Berklee, a tip of the hat to Dave Holland. The 6/8 part was something I copped from a Brand X *Unorthodox Behavior* song that's in 6/8. I thought we had to do something in 6/8

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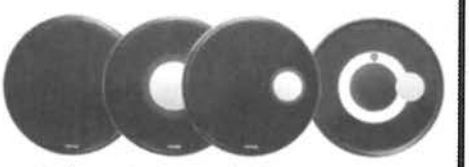

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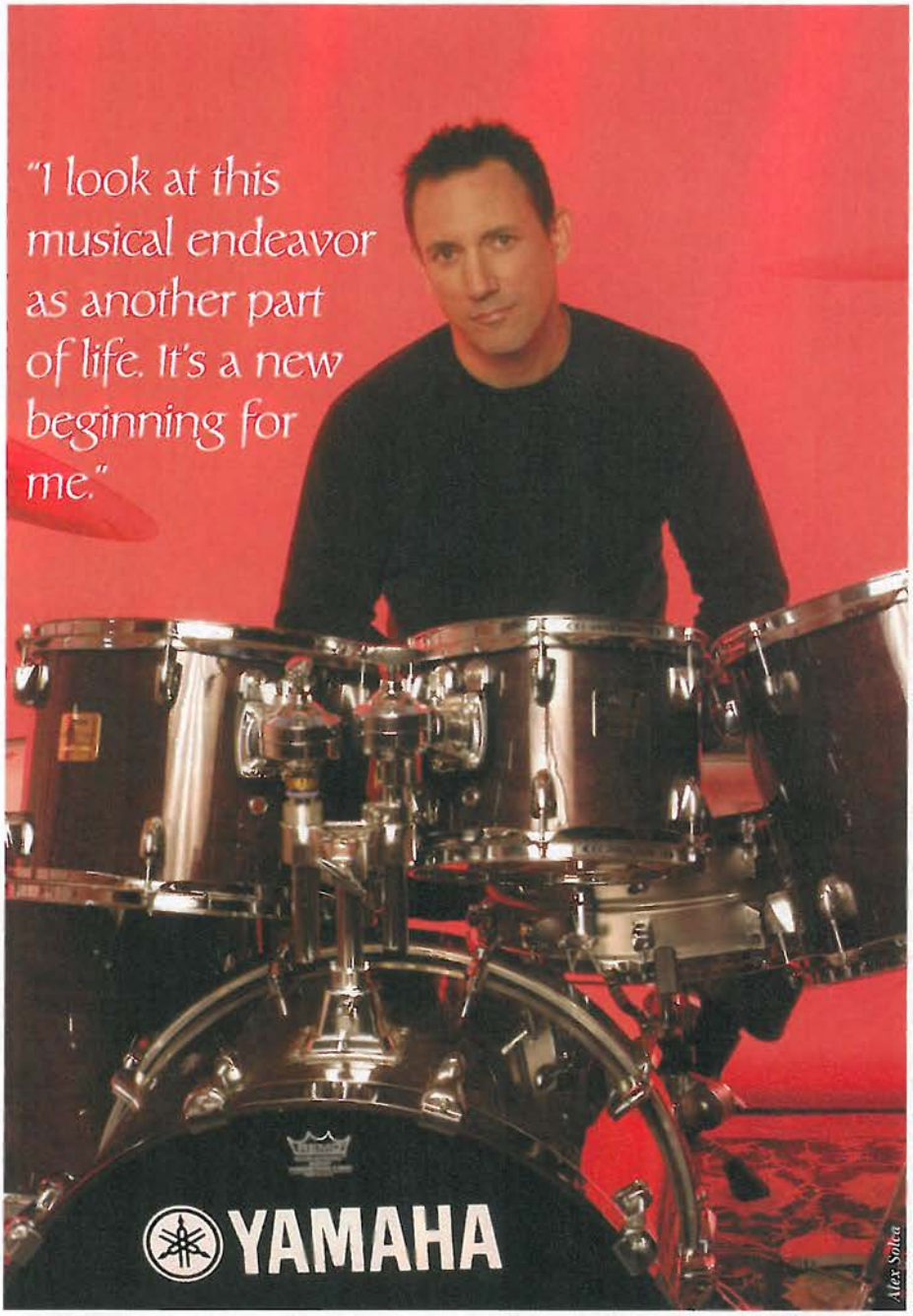

on the record. Whether it was an Allman Brothers 6/8 or a Brand X 6/8, I didn't care.

MD: Do you still like your own drumming?

Jimmy: I do. I think it still sounds fresh. I try not to rehash what I've done before. Part of the reason The Pumpkins aren't together anymore is because we thought, Do we really want to be playing "Cherub Rock" when we're fifty? It's like anything else: marriage, family, music; if it's not growing, then there's something wrong. You need to redirect your energy.

MD: What do you say to those who call *Life Begins Again* "a drummer's record"?

Jimmy: I say, Thank you. [laughs] I was talking to this guy from *The Independent* in London the other day and he said, "Are you mad when people say, 'Just what we need, another drummer's record'?" I replied, "I'll make a bet with you. You take all the drummer's solo records that you think are bad and line them up against all the singer's solo records that you think are bad, and we'll see whose pile is way bigger."

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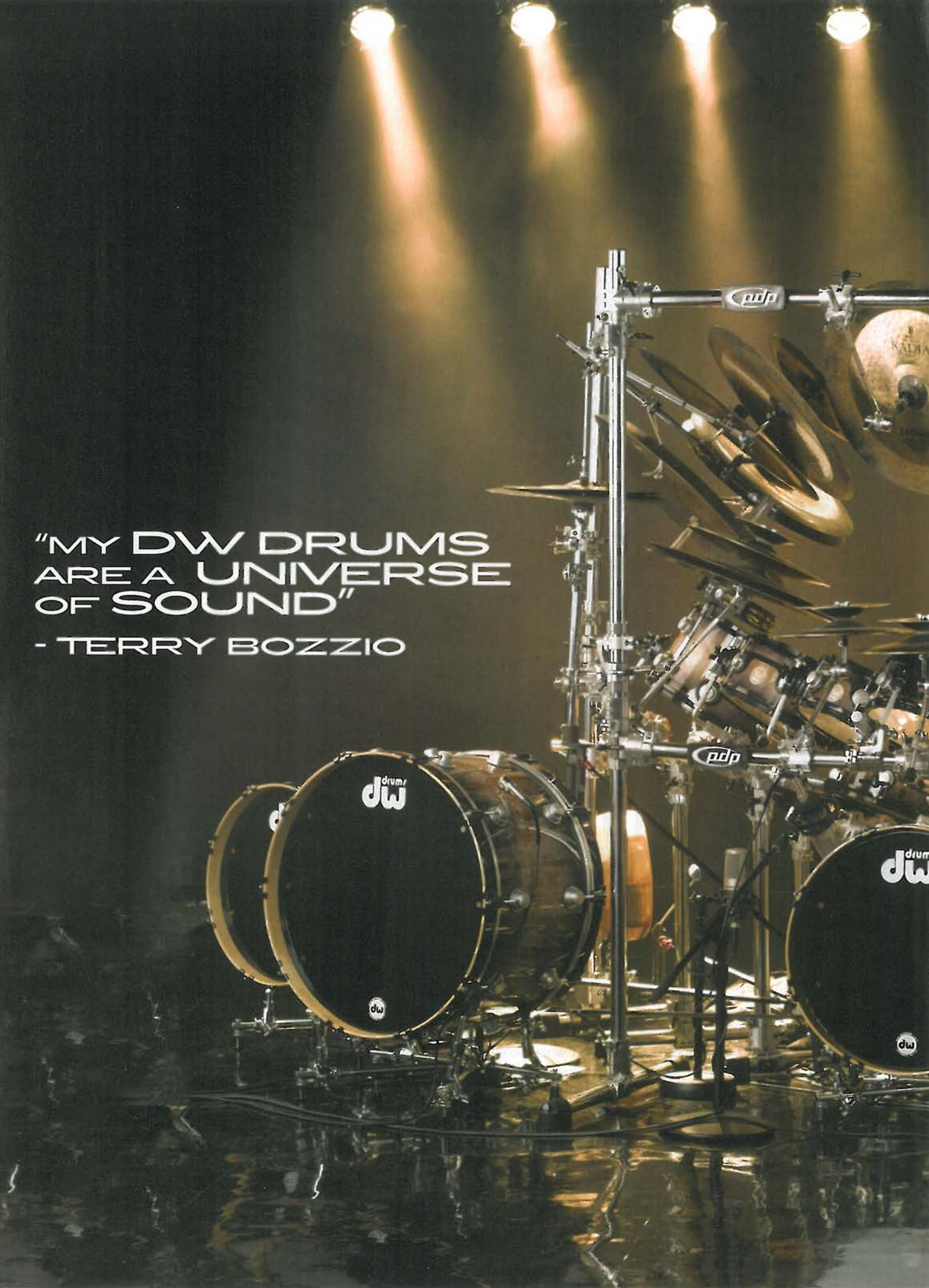
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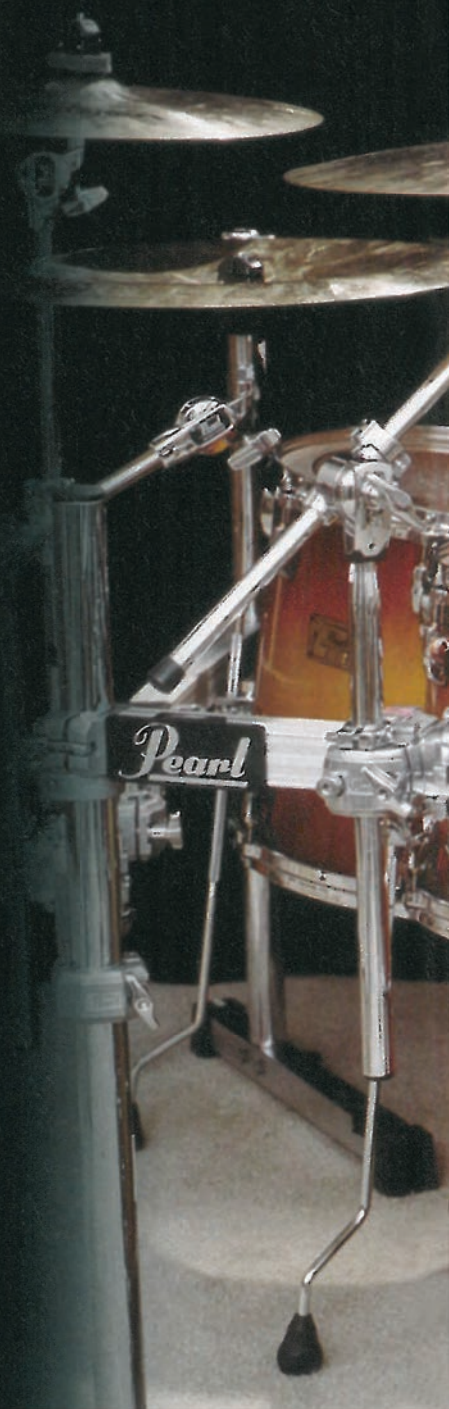
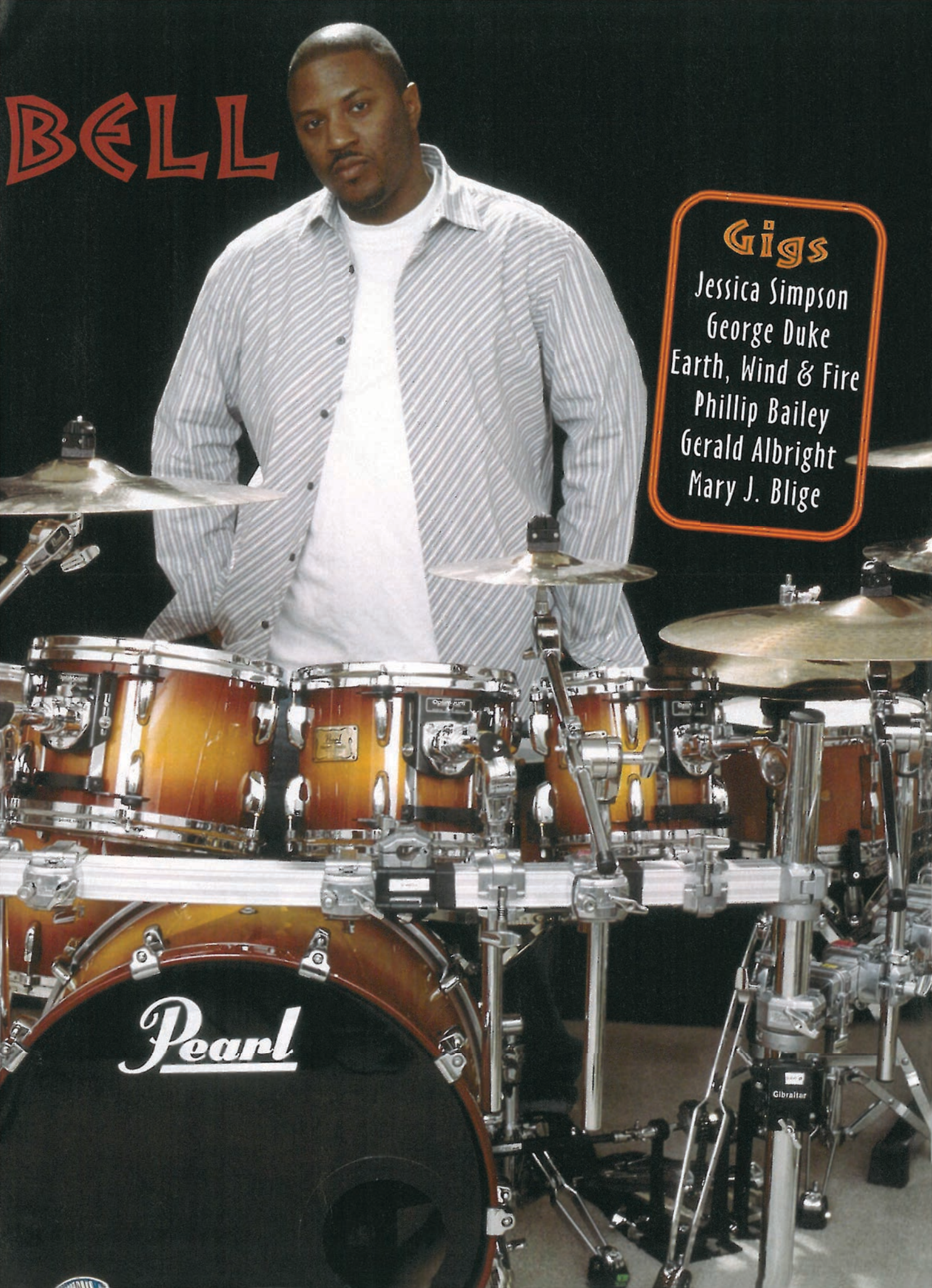
Gorden Camp

R&B Power, Gospel Heart

Story by Robyn Flans *Photos by Alex Solca*

There's never any way to predict what events in our lives will factor most in our development or future. Gorden Campbell surely didn't know at age four, while playing music in his church in Newburgh, New York, that his religious foundation would impact not only his spiritual being but his life's passion and profession.




BELL
Gigs
Jessica Simpson
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By the age of five, Campbell had a kid's drumset, and by the time he was in the fourth grade, he was playing music at school. In junior high, Campbell began taking private lessons to go beyond the basic reading he had learned in school. And while still in high school, his musical experiences in church were taking him far, to national conventions and sessions. It's no surprise that the music Campbell was listening to most was Gospel.

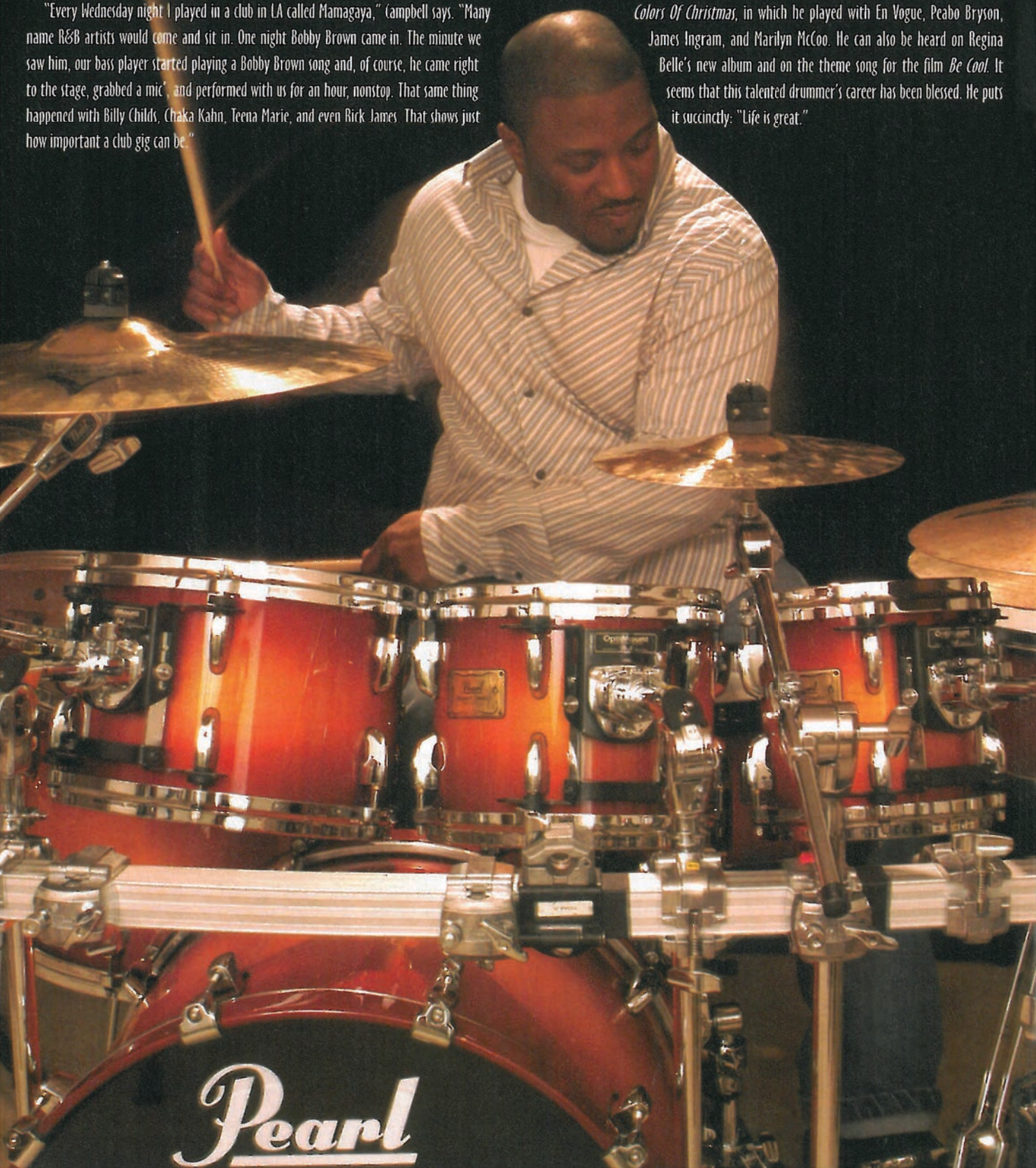
Campbell became a jazz major at Washington, DC's Howard University, where he also played the clubs. Eventually the drummer ended up in Los Angeles. He got involved in the club scene there, which helped catapult his pro career. Besides his extensive experience playing in church, Campbell says his non-stop work in clubs was most valuable in preparing him for his livelihood.

"Every Wednesday night I played in a club in LA called Mamagaya," Campbell says. "Many name R&B artists would come and sit in. One night Bobby Brown came in. The minute we saw him, our bass player started playing a Bobby Brown song and, of course, he came right to the stage, grabbed a mic', and performed with us for an hour, nonstop. That same thing happened with Billy Childs, Chaka Kahn, Teena Marie, and even Rick James. That shows just how important a club gig can be."

Indeed, that's where many management people and musical directors saw Campbell. Through that gig he was hired to work for Phillip Bailey and Gerald Albright, as well as Mary J. Blige, on her 1997 tour. Campbell went on to join Earth, Wind & Fire. His three years with that band cemented his reputation as an R&B drummer with a deep pocket and impressive chops—a description made clear as day on EWF's *Live By Request* DVD.

More recently, Campbell has been nailing down some highly sought after gigs. He somehow manages to balance two at the moment, one with smooth-jazz keyboard giant George Duke, and another with pop icon Jessica Simpson, with whom he can be seen tearing it up on the new *Reality Tour Live* DVD.

Over the Christmas holidays, Campbell did a major show called *The Colors Of Christmas*, in which he played with En Vogue, Peabo Bryson, James Ingram, and Marilyn McCoo. He can also be heard on Regina Belle's new album and on the theme song for the film *Be Cool*. It seems that this talented drummer's career has been blessed. He puts it succinctly: "Life is great."



MD: What was your first big break?

Gorden: My first tour was in '93 with a group called Shai. They were signed to MCA, and had a song called "If I Ever Fall In Love." We all went to the same college in DC. They were in the fine arts building, practicing their singing, and they heard me practicing drums. When they got a deal and started selling records, they put the band together, and I moved out to LA with them.

MD: How old were you?

Gorden: I was twenty-one. I was actually still in school, and I had to call my parents to tell them I was leaving for a tour. They couldn't grasp that concept. Of course, the first thing my mom asked was, What are you going to do about school? My dad got on the phone and said, You don't need to leave. By that point I was working a lot in DC and they weren't paying for anything, so I didn't really have to ask. My mom said I could go as long as I promised to finish school.

MD: And did you?

Gorden: Yes, I went back in '94. I only had one semester left.

MD: As you were growing up in church, were your parents afraid of the music scene?

Gorden: I think any parent has the impression that the music business is all sex, drugs, and rock 'n' roll, that it's not a steady job, and that jazz musicians are always on the street. I grew up in a strict church, so my parents were thinking that if I was out playing rock 'n' roll music, I must be out in the world sinning. My father was more strict than my mom, actually. She figured, We taught him, so we just have to trust in that.

Their thing was that I should get my degree so I could teach and have something to fall back on. I think the attitude changed for the family when I started appearing on TV shows and making money. When I got one of my first pay checks, I sent $800 of it home. Then it went from, "Make sure you can teach," to "When's the next show?" [laughs]

MD: Why did you go to college in the first place?

Gorden: Coming from Newburgh, there's nothing there. I wasn't really exposed to much in New York State, so it was either college or the service. I was a jazz studies major in college. But by my fourth year, some of my friends were already going on tours and I was getting frustrated. I figured

Campbell's Set

Drums: Pearl BRX Masters Studio (six-ply birch shells) in sunburst finish
A. 7x12 maple snare
B. 6½x14 birch snare
C. 8x8 tom
D. 8x10 tom
E. 8x12 tom
F. 12x14 floor tom
G. 16x16 floor tom
H. 18x22 bass drum

Cymbals: Zildjian
1. 13" hi-hats (A Custom top, Mastersound bottom)
2. 14" Oriental China Trash
3. 9" Oriental China splash
4. 17" A Custom crash
5. 20" K Custom Dry ride
6. 10" Oriental China splash
7. 18" A Custom crash
8. 16" Oriental China Trash
9. 16" A Custom crash

Hardware: Pearl, including their Eliminator hi-hat stand and bass drum pedals (loose spring tension) and ICON curved rack, Roc-N-Soc throne
Heads: Remo C.S. (black dot) on snare batter, Diplomat snare-side (tight, high pitched), Pinstripes (or clear Emperors) on tom batters, clear Diplomats on bottoms, PowerStroke 3 on kick, Pearl logo head on front
Sticks: Zildjian Sonny Emory signature model
Electronics: Akai MPC 60, Roland SPD-20
Microphones: various Shure models

I'd just focus on graduating and keep shedding. But then a week later, I got the call for Shai.

MD: What did you get out of going to college as a jazz major?

Gorden: A lot of it was organization—learning how to organize my schedule, as well as learning to play all of the instruments, like timpani, mallets, and so on.

In college, I was in DC and my family was in New York, so I was on my own. I had to either sink or swim, learn how to take care of paying my bills on time, and take care of business. Also, DC has a huge music scene and clubs to perform in.

Living in DC and playing so many club gigs really helped me learn how to play. I'd do a gig and for some reason bring a piccolo snare drum to the club. The guy I'd be playing with would say, "Why do you have a piccolo? It's not in context with this little club. It's going to be too loud." Or I'd be playing my kick drum too loud or hitting the snare too hard. So I learned musicality.

MD: Speaking of musicality, I understand that you also played organ early on.

Gorden: My grandfather was a pastor. I grew up in church and there were instruments everywhere.

MD: Do you think your ability on organ has helped your musicality on drums?

Gorden: Definitely. It's not always about chops. It's more about the song or the music. I think I hear a little more melodically and I think it opens my ears up, bottom line. If all you're thinking about is rhythm or playing your next lick, you're going to sound like that. If you're hearing the melody and understanding the chords and where it's going, you play more according to what the music is dictating, rather than trying to dictate the music.

MD: What was your first tour like?

Gorden: It was cool. Eight hundred dollars a week was amazing to me at the time. Four of us were from DC. We had an apartment at the Oakwoods and a rental car, and they bought us all pagers. We thought we were stars. Any gear we wanted, the next day it would be delivered. It was night and day from being in school to doing that tour. We did all of the arenas and all the major TV shows, including Arsenio Hall and Disney specials. We went to Japan and Europe. I left DC during spring break and didn't get back there until

the end of December. It was almost a year.

MD: What happened after Shai?

Gorden: That was '93 and a little into '94. That's how I moved to LA. I graduated college and came out to do one of the last Arsenio Hall shows with Shai. I stayed with a friend who was playing with Gerald Albright, whose drummer was about to leave. My friend gave a video of me playing to the manager, and that's how I got the gig with Gerald.

MD: How was the Albright gig?

Gorden: It was great. With certain gigs, if you're on them, people just assume you can play, and that's one of those gigs.

> "If it's Jessica Simpson, George Duke, or Earth, Wind & Fire, it's about what I call creating that 'hump,' that feel that makes people want to move their feet."

MD: What did that gig require of you as a player?

Gorden: Definitely to be funky, but you have to have the jazz sensibilities too.

MD: Meaning?

Gorden: You have to be versatile, because he does some straight ahead stuff, some R&B ballads—and there's even some fusiony kind of stuff. And you have to know how to solo, because I always got a big solo spot. So that gig opened me up to a bunch of different styles of music.

I played with Gerald for about four years off and on. And Lalah Hathaway was on it too, because she was managed by the same people. Whenever there was a Gerald gig, she was the featured artist. We were like a family, one band with Gerald and her.

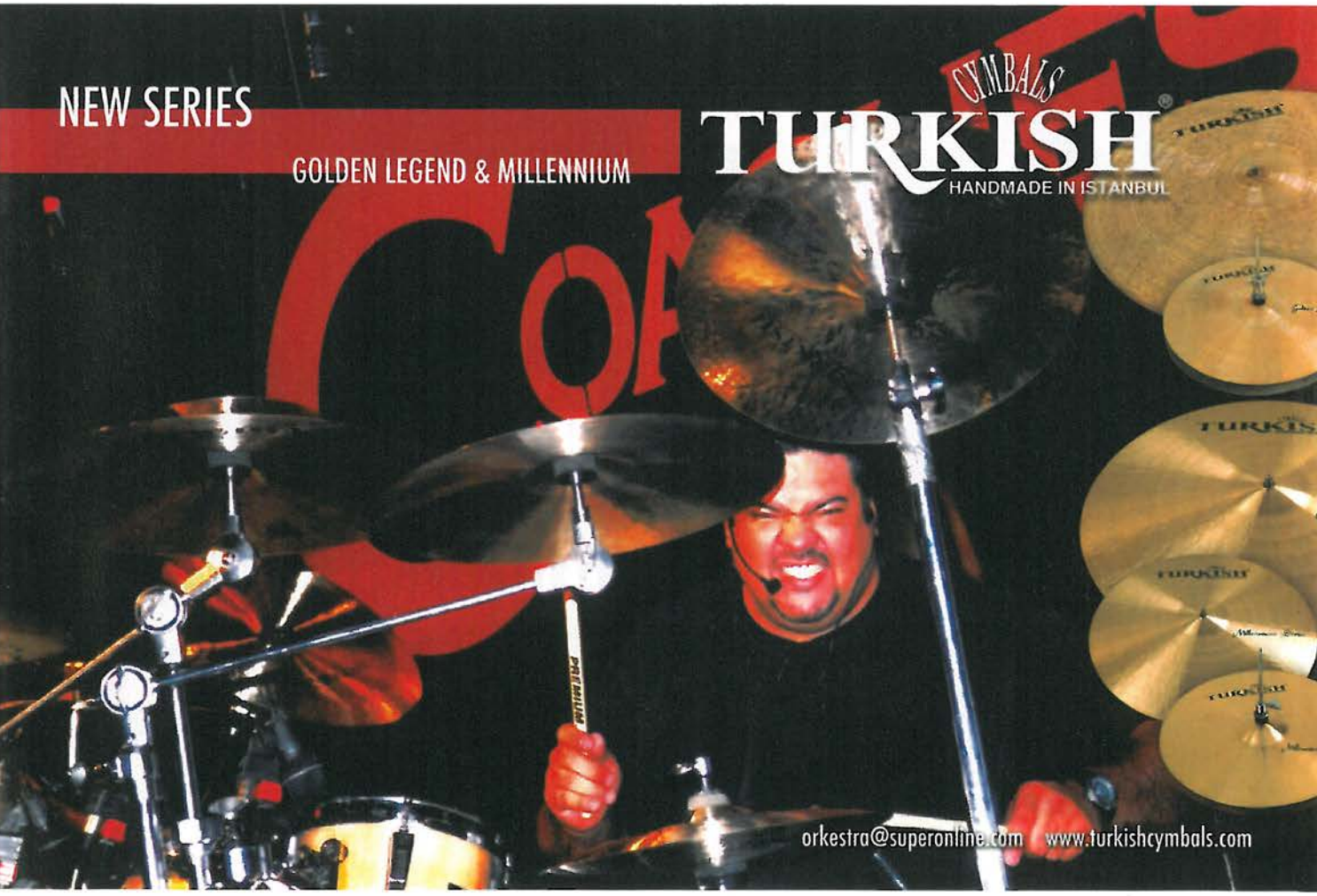
MD: What happened?

Gorden: The natural progression of work. I was still playing with Shai at times, and I started with a group called Brownstone. And in between Gerald gigs I was working with Eric Benet and Rahsaan Patterson. It started getting busy to where these gigs were overlapping and I'd have to get a sub.

Then I started working with a guy named Kenny Lattimore, who was on Columbia in '96, and we opened for Barry White that summer. In between, I was working with Bobby Lyle, Doc Powell, and Ricky Minor, who I did a gig for with Whitney Houston on the Billboard Awards. It was nonstop work.

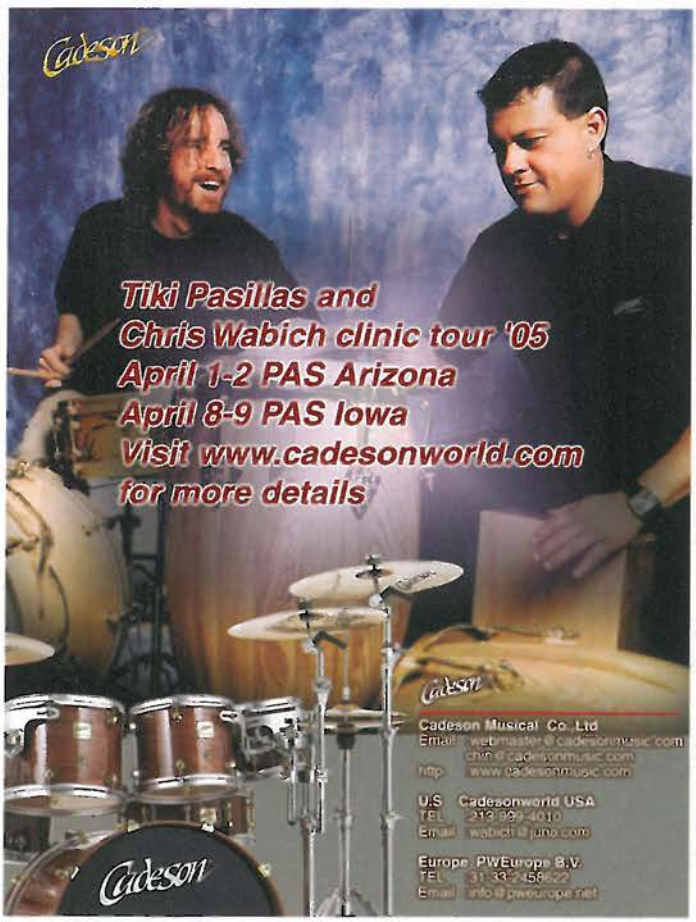
MD: Was there ever a gig you were nervous about and that you felt you couldn't cut?

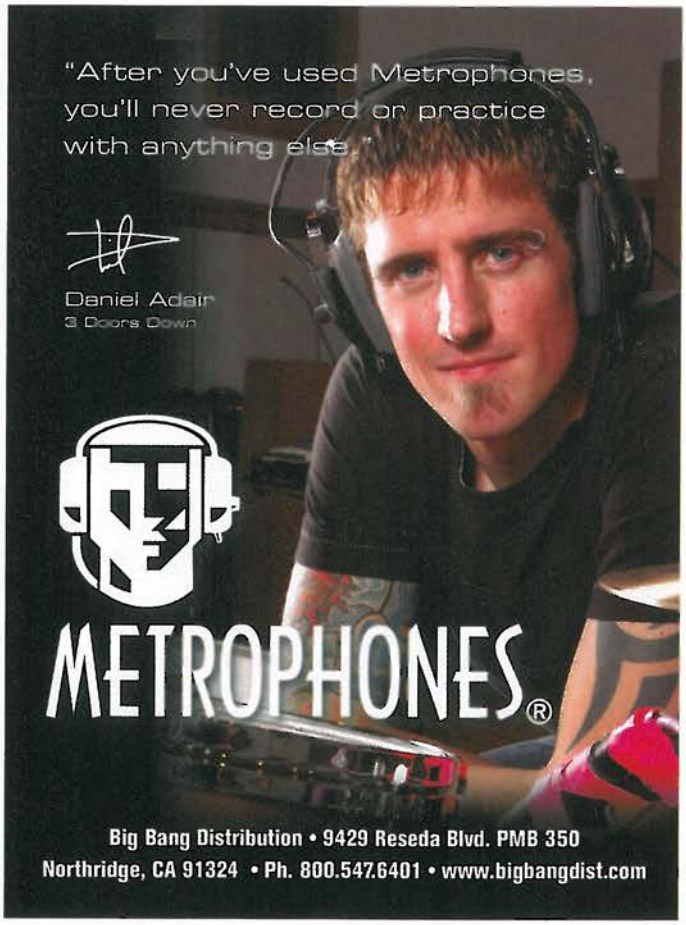
Gorden: I was nervous before the Whitney Houston gig. This was before Ricky Minor was doing all the stuff he's doing now. I barely knew of him then, and he had an intimidating personality at the rehearsal. On most pop gigs, you don't read, but he had charts for everything. I can read, but I hadn't been using my eyes for a couple of years. So I



was a little nervous, being that we were rehearsing in Vegas and it was the Billboard Awards. But he said, "I know you can read. Just play."

Another time I was a little nervous was in '99, when I got the Earth, Wind & Fire gig. I was coming in right after Sonny Emory. I didn't really rehearse with the band—just the rhythm section—before my first couple of shows. A lot of it is just about my confidence level. Instead of thinking, Man, I have to play like Sonny Emory, I needed to just play like *me*. Once I relaxed, it was great. It's just about confidence, and I still have bouts with that.





MD: So what happened after Kenny Lattimore?

Gorden: I was doing a show called *Planet Groove* on BET, which was a live show with Rahsaan Patterson. They aired it over and over again, it seemed that everybody saw it, and the calls kept coming for me. In '97 I did a tour with Mary J. Blige when she fired her drummer.

MD: What did her music require of you?

Gorden: That's funk. A lot of these gigs are drum machine–driven, too. Learning how to play with a machine is real important. You've got to learn how to play so that it feels good and you don't flam any notes with the machine.

MD: How do you learn to do that?

Gorden: You just have to practice with a machine, over and over. That's it. I would just practice for hours at the rehearsal hall before everybody else got there, and I'd stay for hours after everybody left. After a while, you get it.

I feel that I naturally play on top of the beat, so in my mind I had to play behind a little bit. I got to a point where I would be playing along with the machine and I wouldn't be able to hear it at all. I was so precise with it that I couldn't hear it. That's when I knew I had it.

With a lot of groups I was playing with, we didn't have in-ear monitors like they do today. We never had clicks. We didn't have count-offs. We just had a programmed MPC drum machine that they played through the monitors, and we just fell in. After a while of doing that every night, you kinda know where it is. It was just a monitor and a loop.

Now I don't really need to hear the click. If I get a count off, I'll be spot on with it. It's funny, but I know a lot of older guys who can't play with a drum machine because they never had to. They're great drummers, but it's not part of their vocabulary.

MD: It's a whole other way of playing.

Gorden: Pretty much all of the younger guys know how to do that, because every gig has Pro Tools now and we're required to play along with those tracks. I recently did all of Brandy's TV show performances when her *Full Moon* album came out. The single we were playing, "What About Us," has a really odd programmed rhythm part. It's not even natural to listen to, but the way the instruments are built, it has a groove to it. At the rehearsal, the Pro Tools guy was taking everything out of his track—the hi-hat, the kick—going, "It's off." I said, "But that's the song, put it back in." They couldn't understand me wanting it in there. But I was comfortable playing with it. That's what you have to be able to do.

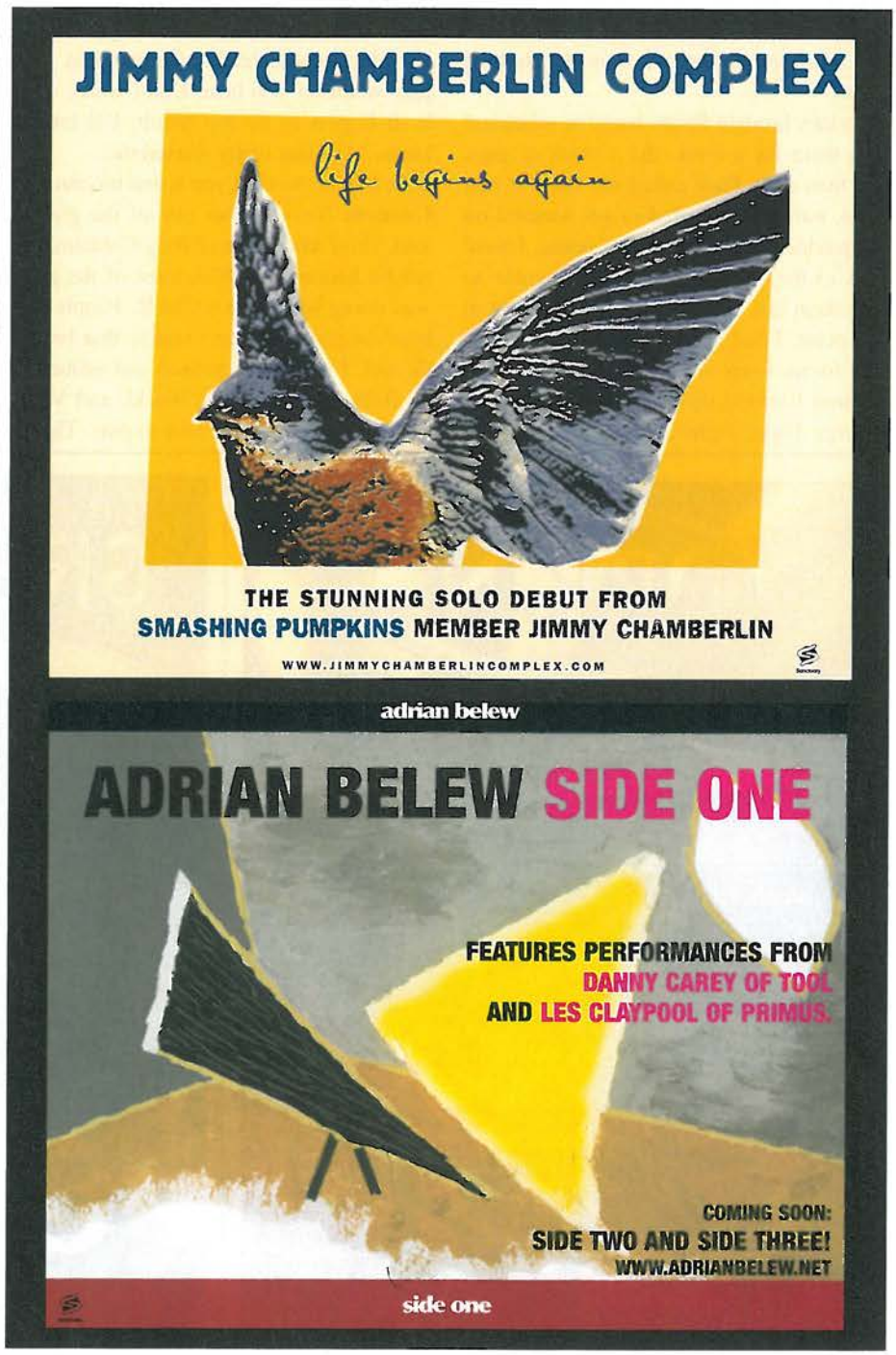
MD: I understand that you got the Earth, Wind & Fire gig after working with Phillip Bailey. What was the challenge of Earth, Wind & Fire?

Gorden: They call it steering the ship—just driving the band. It's a big band with horns, singers, dancers, and three percussionists, so it's about holding all of that together.

MD: And how does a drummer do that?

Gorden: By really driving the groove, just laying it down, meat 'n' potatoes. But because Sonny Emory had all that *and* he had tremendous chops, I had to figure out my own way of incorporating those chops while still making everything feel stable.

In hip-hop, a lot of the fills are looser. If you can't clearly show where 1 is, you might lose somebody. For EWF, I had to really figure out how to do a fill that was fast like Sonny, but that still kept the pulse.



Gorden Campbell

A lot of the hip-hop stuff can be a little syncopated and outside the pulse, but if I did too much of that the horn players would say, "You gotta lay it down." After a while I could tell it was okay, though, because they were dancing.

MD: What was the hardest EWF song to play?

Gorden: "Fantasy" was one of the harder ones. But I shedded a lot on all of that stuff, so after a while it became second nature. I was with them almost three years. I left in 2001 because one day they came to me and said they wanted to bring Sonny back. They gave me a nice sum of money and said, "We like what you do, but we want the flash of Sonny."

So they brought Sonny back, he rehearsed with them for a week, did a week of gigs, and then quit. They called me back at that point, but I had decided to get focused on my production goals and stay home. I went back to the band for a couple of weeks to help them out, but it just didn't feel right at that point. I had a daughter, so I felt it was time for me to try to stay home more.

Then I ended up getting the gig with George Duke right away. At that point Teddy Campbell was getting busy and didn't have time to work with George, so he recommended me.

MD: What does that gig need from you?

Gorden: It's cool, because George doesn't like to rehearse. The first time we got together at his house, he gave me a tape of stuff and we played. It was just him and me, and we played through a bit of the tunes. Then he said, "Ah, you got it. You're cool. Just listen to the tape. See you at the airport."

I was holding back a little because, especially with the older guys, you don't want to be busy and thought of as flashy, so I was just playing straight. But George said, "Just play whatever you hear. Don't worry about it. If it gets to be too much, I'll let you know." And that really relaxed me.

MD: Did he ever tell you it was too much?

Gorden: Never. After one of the gigs he said, "You remind me of Billy Cobham. You need a fusion gig!" Still, most of the gigs I was doing were pop or R&B. People who hear me probably don't realize that besides Gospel, I'm deeply inspired and influenced by Billy Cobham, Dave Weckl, and Vinnie Colaiuta. That's what I love to play. The gig with George has been great.

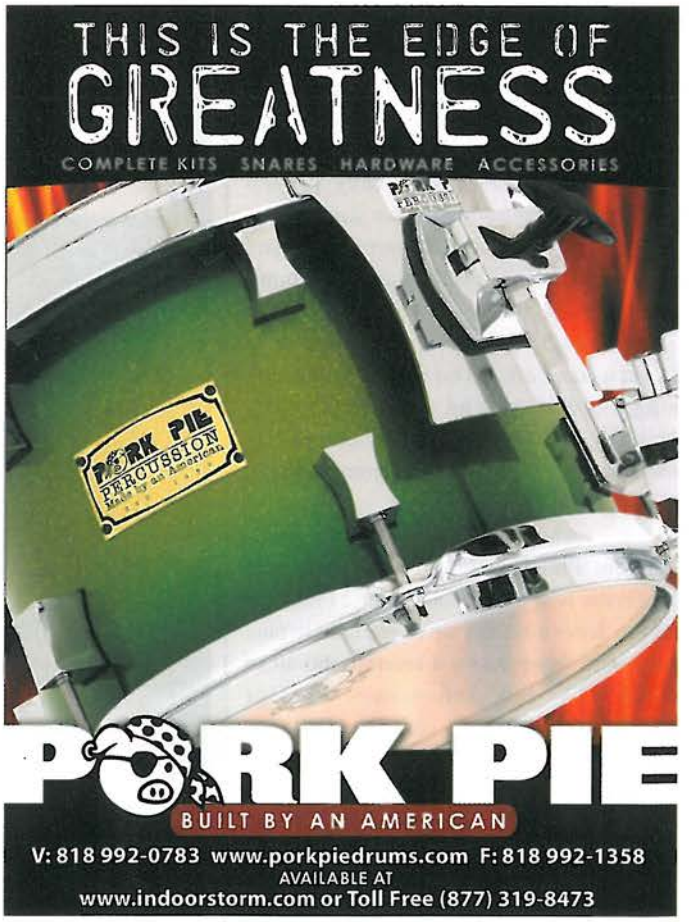
MD: Speaking of Billy Cobham, he must have been a big influence. You play ride rhythms with your left hand, the way he does.

Gorden: The first jazz record I ever bought was one of Billy's, *Glass Menagerie*. But I didn't see him play until I got to college in 1989. I didn't realize that he led with his left hand until then. I'd been playing that way since I started, when I was five.

I think leading with your left lends a certain kind of funk to the feel. I know some right-handed players who switch to it when they want a looser feel. I also think it's easier to get around the kit playing that way, and it makes more sense than crossing your hands to play the hi-hat.

MD: How did *The Colors Of Christmas* come about? It's completely different from other things you've done.

Gorden: Completely. It's full orchestra, choir, and all reading. I got that because I used to play in a band called The Polyester Players. Every drummer in LA has been through that band. It started as a jam session down in Santa Monica, and it just got big. It became the hip LA spot. I happened to sit in



with them again recently, and the keyboard player, Herman Jackson, asked me if I wanted to do a show with Jessica Simpson. We did that show and she liked the band so much, we went on tour last spring through the summer.

MD: What is Jessica Simpson like musically?

Gorden: It's a regular pop gig. I think the bottom line on any gig is that you have to make the music feel good. I listen to everything and I appreciate everything. If it's Jessica Simpson, George Duke, or Earth, Wind & Fire, it's about what I call creating that "hump," that feel that makes people want to move their feet. I think that's what Jessica liked about that band.

For Jessica's gig, there are Pro Tools tracks and there's a click. I have in-ear monitors, and I actually run a mixer so I can control the levels of the click, the background vocals, her lead vocals, the Pro Tools stuff, and so on. Jessica's music is a mix of things. It has some R&B pop stuff, and then it has "Take My Breath Away" and "Angels," which are like a pop-rock sound.

MD: What would you tell a young player coming up today to do to prepare for the type of work you do?

Gorden: You have to practice hard and learn how to read. You should also listen to a lot of records and practice to records a lot. The experience I received playing with that band in DC helped me too. The bandleader helped me by telling me not to copy what people were playing on records, but to try to understand *why* they were playing what they were playing. Why did the drums do a fill right there leading into the bridge? Don't listen to the actual fill to try to cop it exactly, try to understand the concept and the musicality.

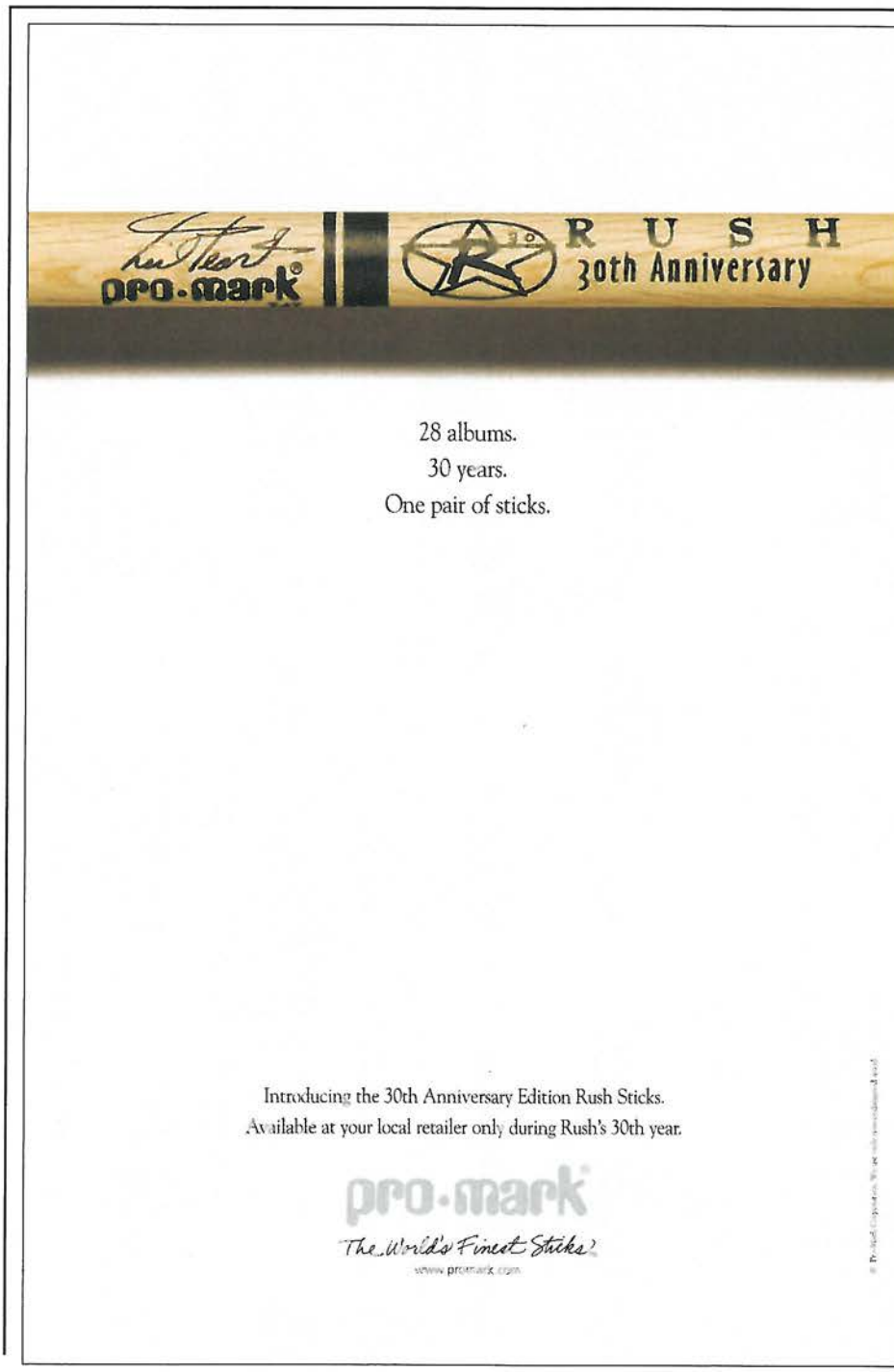
I definitely recommend that drummers learn how to play with a drum machine. Even if you only have a little drum machine—or even just some newer music on disc—learn how to play with that, because that feel is what the contemporary gigs require. Don't get consumed by it, though, because every drummer has an ebb and flow. Some drummers, like Ricky Lawson, have perfect time. But really, I don't know too many drummers who don't speed up a little bit. Just learn how to make it all feel good within the parameters of the song.

MD: Can you recommend music for younger players to listen to?

Gorden: Kids should listen to Joel Smith on any older Edwin Hawkins album, like *Let Us Go Into The House Of The Lord,* with the hit "Oh Happy Day." There are some songs on there where Joel is going nuts on the drums. There's another guy, Jeff Davis from New York, who is also nuts on the drums. You should also listen to Hesekiah Walker with Mario Winans and Gerald Heyward. A lot of the Gospel albums are live sessions recorded in church. There's also a new Israel and Newbreed album/DVD with Chris Coleman, who won the Guitar Center Drum-Off three years ago. And any Fred Hammond album with my best friend, Marvin McQuitty, on drums is great to listen to.

MD: It sounds like what really prepared you for your mission in life was the church.

Gorden: It *was* the church, no question. There's such a wave now of great drummers who got their start playing there. I tell people, if you can play in church, you can do any gig, because that style of music is everything.



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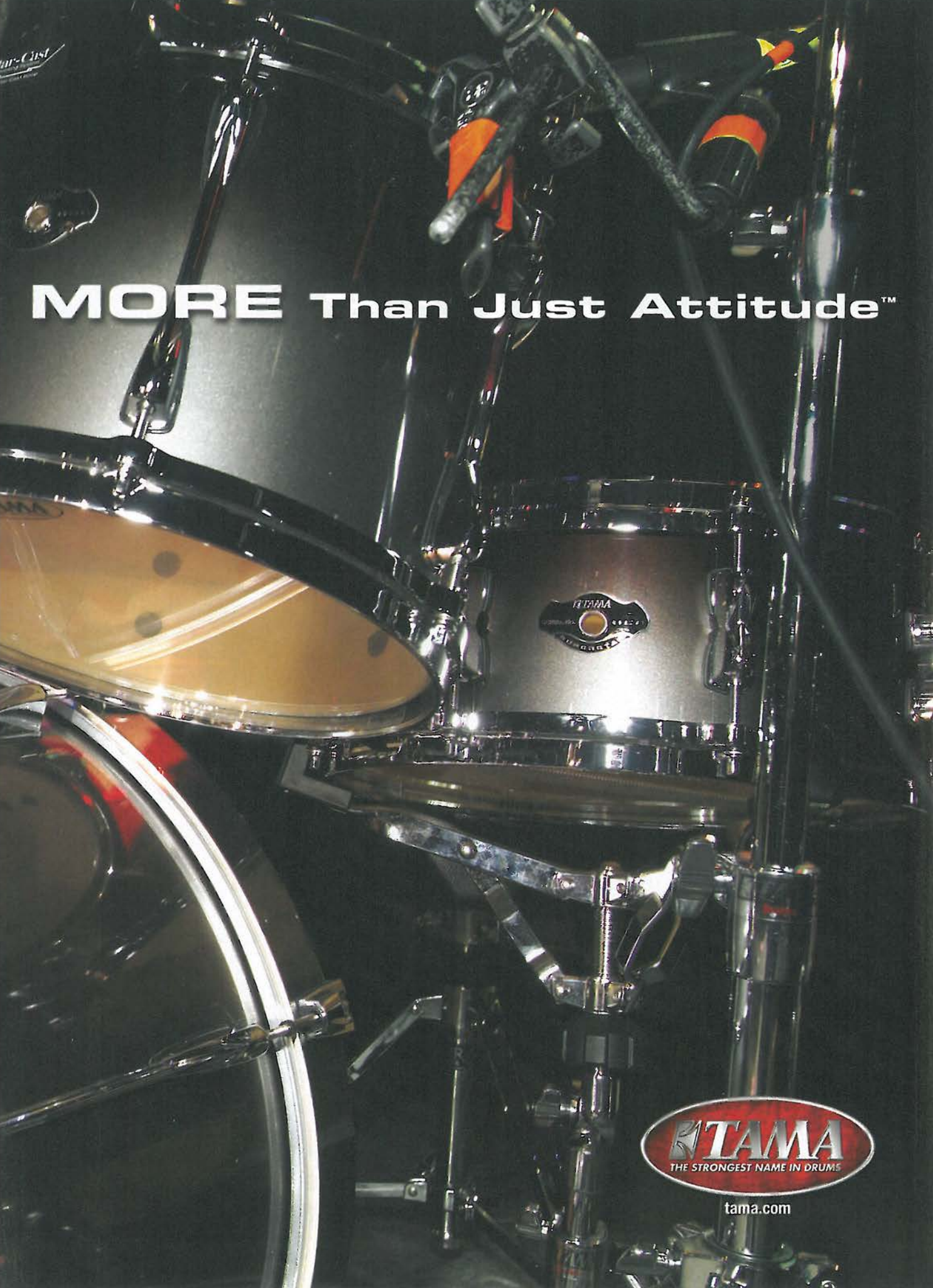
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So you want to be a full-time musician? Well, there are the obvious career paths. Put together a slammin' little band, sign a record deal, and make millions. Or audition for a major orchestra, win the chair, and perform in the world's most prestigious concert halls. But what if neither of these dreams comes true? What if you want more security than the popular music world can offer? What if you get more of a thrill by inspiring young people to play music than by performing in the serious culture of classical music?

Many drummers make full-time livings in music doing other things besides live performances and studio work. These alternate activities include teaching, composing, producing, engineering, programming, and merchandising. Drummers who pursue those activities don't get the airtime or magazine pages that are devoted to rock stars, jazz greats, and orchestral masters. But they still enjoy a life in music, along with the challenge and reward of directing their own careers.

Own Future

The Drummer As Entrepreneur

by Harriet L. Schwartz

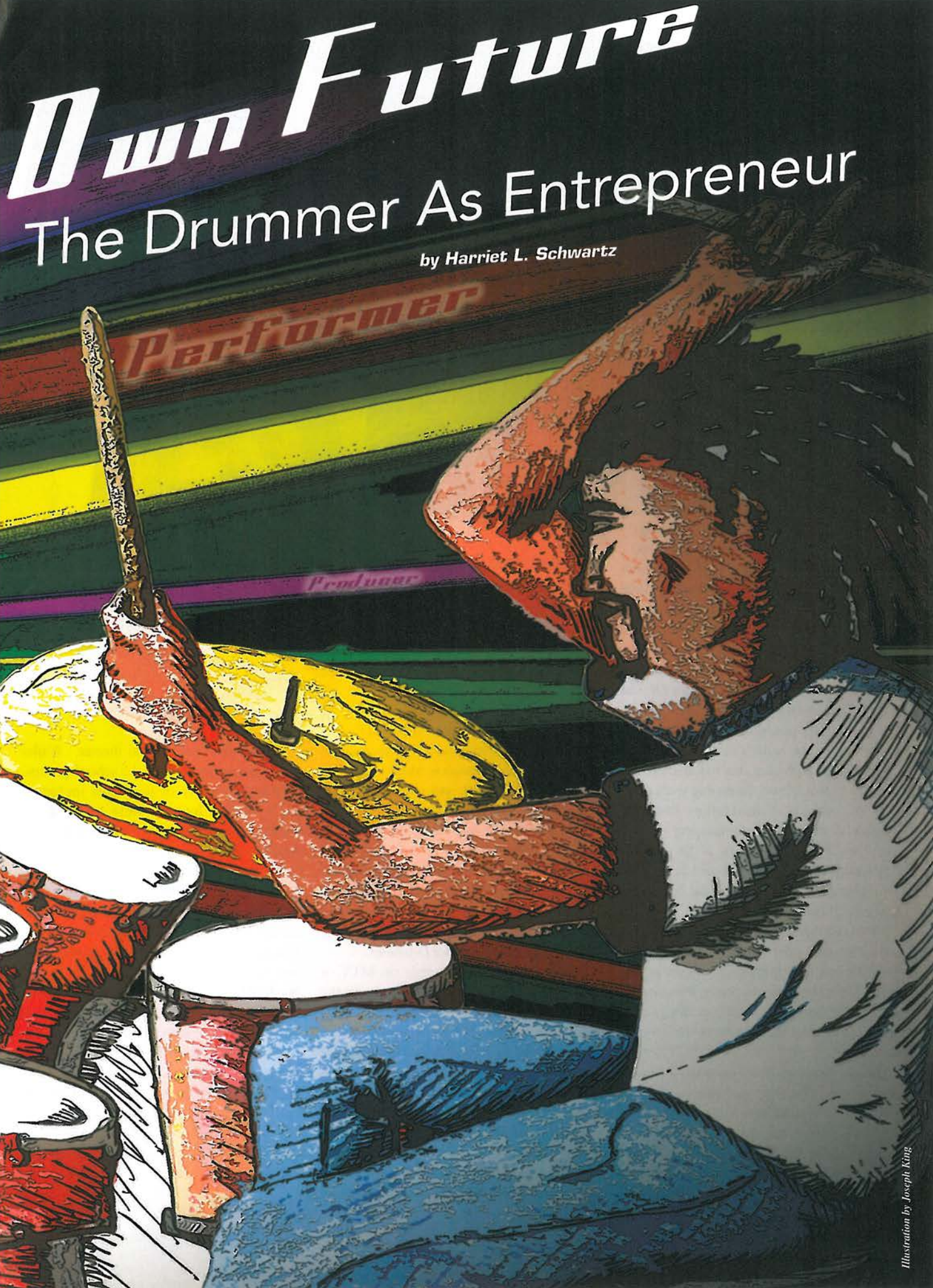
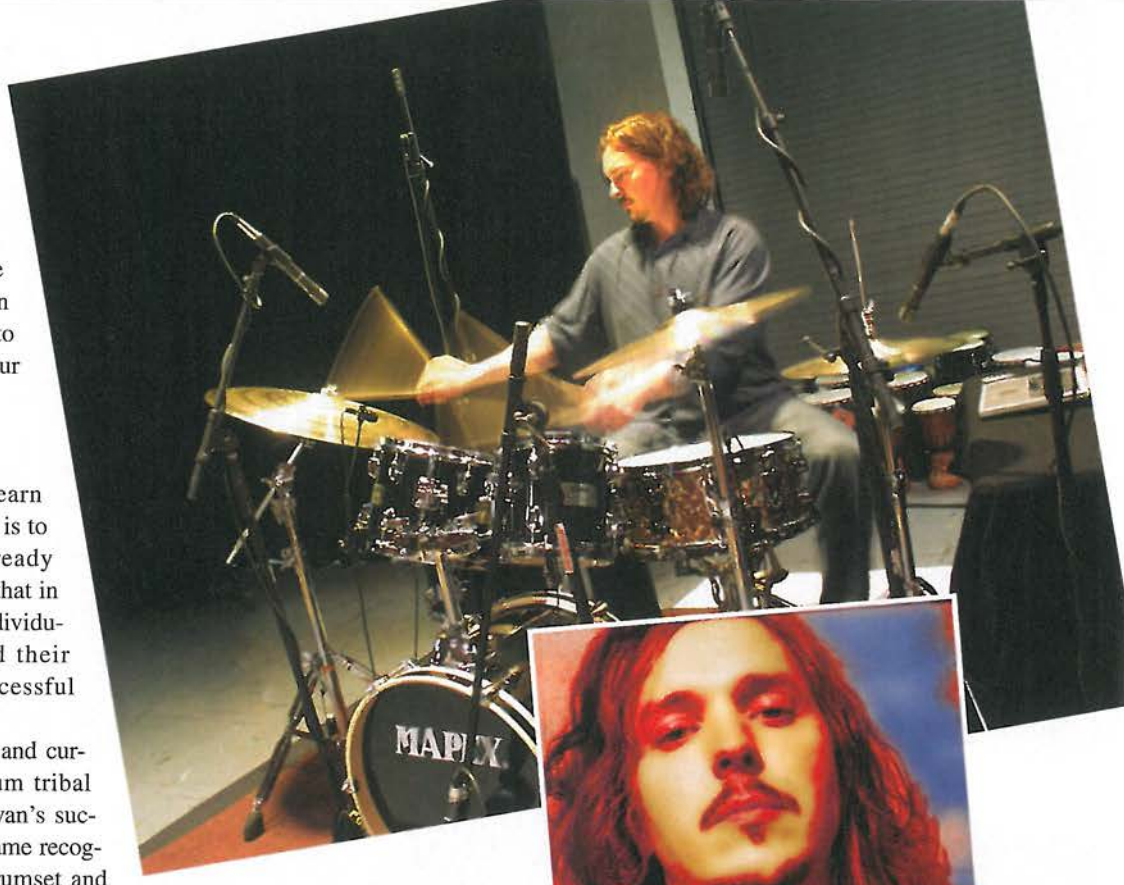
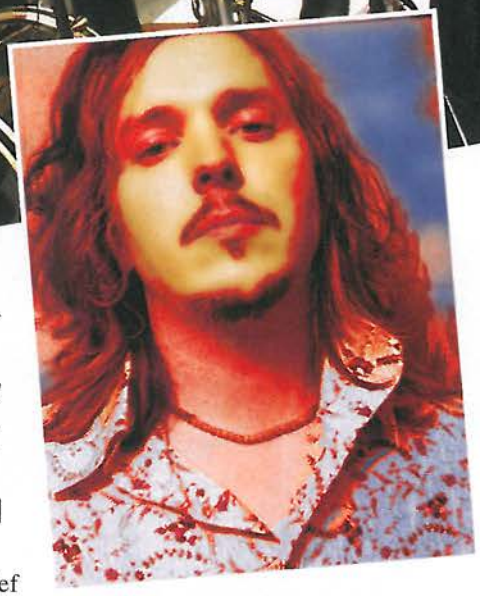


Illustration by Joseph King

The topics you'll need to explore if you're considering an entrepreneurial career path could fill books. This article will provide the initial questions you should be asking yourself, as well as an overview of what you'll need to learn in order to succeed in your own music-related business.





"In some ways I love teaching more than performing live. I get to interact with the people instead of just playing for them."
Jim Donovan

Three Who Did It

One of the best ways to learn about entrepreneurial activities is to listen to those who have already been successful at them. With that in mind, we approached three individuals who have each parlayed their drumming interests into successful alternative careers.

Jim Donovan is a founding and current member of multi-platinum tribal rock band Rusted Root. Donovan's success with that band gave him name recognition and credibility in the drumset and hand-drumming communities. His independent career path started to take shape in 1998 when he made his first solo recording—a meditation album called *Indigo*. Donovan has since released two more solo CDs, including *Revelation #9*, which was nominated for 2004 Electronica Album Of The Year by Just Plain Folks Songwriters.

Jim has also produced four instructional drumming CDs, which evolved from his active teaching practice. He has also created a series of educational drumming workshops that he conducts at universities, festivals, schools, corporations, and specialty venues. He's an adjunct professor at St. Francis University in Pennsylvania, and is the current director of percussion at the New York Institute Of Dance And Education.

"I found that I love teaching," Donovan says. "In some ways I love it more than performing live. I get to interact *with* the people instead of just playing *for* them. My nature is to build things. I like tweaking things until they're great, and then tweaking them a little more."

Brian Stephens is an in-demand session and gigging drummer who proves that you don't have to live in New York, Los Angeles, or Nashville to succeed. Stephens lives in Atlanta, where his reputation earns him calls to play throughout the southeast. Not wanting to rely solely on his work behind the kit, Stephens is the manager and chief engineer of his own studio and production company, Sound Decision Studios. He has produced, engineered, and mixed recording projects for local independent artists as well as for corporate clients like Warner Bros. Records, Twentieth Century Fox, and Verizon Wireless. He has also written for *Modern Drummer* and *Performer* magazines. And in 2000, Stephens released his first drum instructional audio book, *Stickin' It Out—The Anatomy Of A Professional Drummer*.

"A lot of people see bands on MTV or see players in magazines who are in the upper echelons of the business," Stephens says. "They make the mistake of thinking that 'success' is getting where those people are. For me, success in this business is in creating work you enjoy and making a living doing it."

Zig Wajler Jr. began his career as a performer, but eventually realized that teaching was his true calling. He began developing school programs that have since evolved into what he calls "educational theater." Wajler works primarily with K-12 school groups, offering a variety of programs including Zig's Musical Journey, West Africa Meets HipHop, Hands On Latin Style, and Literacy And Music Composition With Computers.

Wajler has also produced several CDs and books, including *World Beat Fun* and a drumset play-along CD. He serves as a committee member for the MARS Music Foundation and Be True Arts Foundation, and is the creator of READ It Again Nashville. During the past seven years, Wajler has averaged 150 productions a year. He has also been seen on all three major networks, as well as on PBS, Comedy Central, and VH-1.

"This is how I earn a living outside the box," Wajler says. "It's not about waiting for someone to call and sign you to a thirty-week tour—and then looking for another gig as soon as the tour ends."

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Getting Started

The first step to exploring an entrepreneurial music career is honest self-assessment. Begin by considering whether you have the skills, strengths, and personality to be self-employed. For example, are you a self-starter who is disciplined enough to set goals, meet deadlines, and follow through on tasks (even the ones you don't like) without pressure from a supervisor or teacher? Will you effectively create and pursue a larger vision for your work, while also managing the details? Are you comfortable taking risks? Do you enjoy promoting yourself and your work? Can you effectively work on several projects at once, or do you need to focus on one thing at a time?

These questions point to some of the key elements of building and maintaining a successful entrepreneurial music–related career. For a more thorough self-assessment, you may want to work through a career exploration book or meet with a career counselor in your area.

Vision And Strategy

Perhaps you've been dreaming of setting up your own recording studio, or developing a music outreach program for kids. If so, then you already have a vision for your work. If not, then you need to further assess your skills and strengths.

Zig Wajler had a clear sense of his various skills, and he set out to imagine how those skills could become a full-time business. "I knew I had skills as a drummer, a percussionist, a keyboard player, and a composer," says Wajler. "The question was, how could I combine these skills with my education background in order to make a living?"

After you determine the endeavors you wish to pursue, you should develop a business plan. This will force you to assess the market, develop a promotional strategy, estimate expenses and financial goals, prepare for unexpected obstacles, and determine whether you need outside resources to start your business. And speaking of outside resources, you'll need a business plan if you apply for a bank loan. That same plan will help you assess your progress once your business is up and running.

"I have two different business plans," says Brian Stephens. "One is for Brian the drummer. When I opened my recording studio about five years ago, my business partner and I developed a plan for what we wanted to do with our studio. I revise the plan periodically. At least once a year, I look at where I am and where I want to be in the next year or two. Actually, that evaluation goes on every day."

Show Me The Money

Whether you plan to teach private lessons to school children, present large-scale motivational programs for major corporations, or sell instructional DVDs, you need to determine what to charge for your product. This can be a stressful situation. Many musicians fear that if they charge too much, no one will hire them or buy their materials. If they charge too little, they will devalue their work or be exploited.

Fortunately, there is a clear strategy to help you set your fees. First, find others who are doing similar work in your area and see what they're charging. If you're just starting out and you don't yet have name recognition or credibility, you may want to charge slightly less than the going rate. That should pull in new clients and help you get established. If you *have* name recognition—perhaps from playing in a successful band or teaching in a local music store—then you may be able to charge fees that are more comparable to those charged by other established individuals.

"For the educational series and family series things I do," says Zig Wajler, "fees are based on credentials and credibility. If you're just getting started, you might need to work for next to nothing—maybe even for free—to get your name out. But I have a huge list of references, so I can say, Here's the fee, and here are my references.

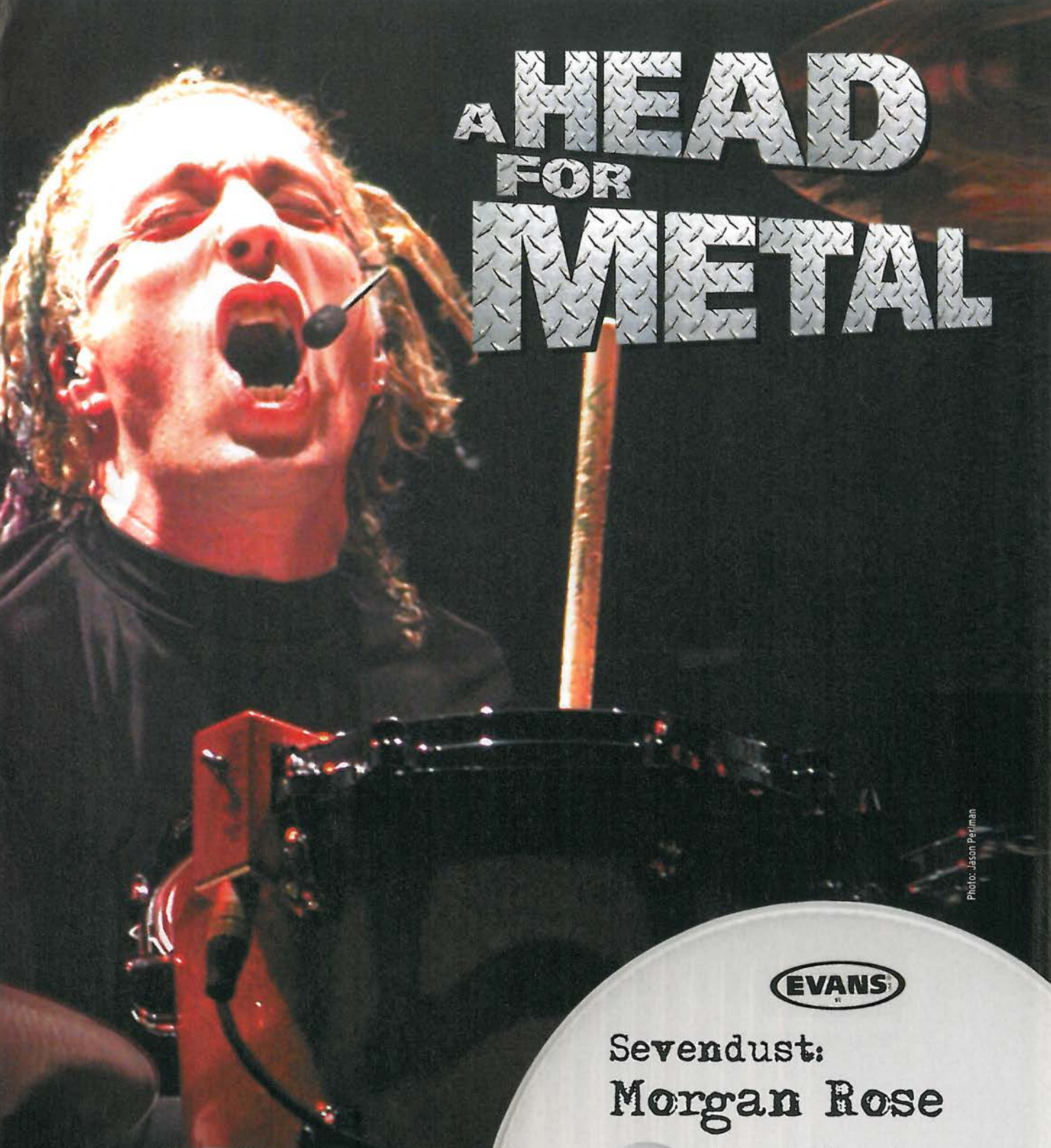
"You have to judge size of audience, and take into account your overhead, including travel expenses and other costs of doing business. Music is one side of the business, getting paid is the other. You need to get paid so you can pay your bills and live well. Getting paid to do something you love...well, that's success."

"For me, success in this business is in creating work you enjoy and making a living doing it."

Brian Stephens

Promotion

Some musicians enjoy the promotional aspect of self-employment. Others find promoting themselves and their work awkward or even stressful. But if your self-driven



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business is going to succeed, you *must* devote a good deal of effort to promotion.

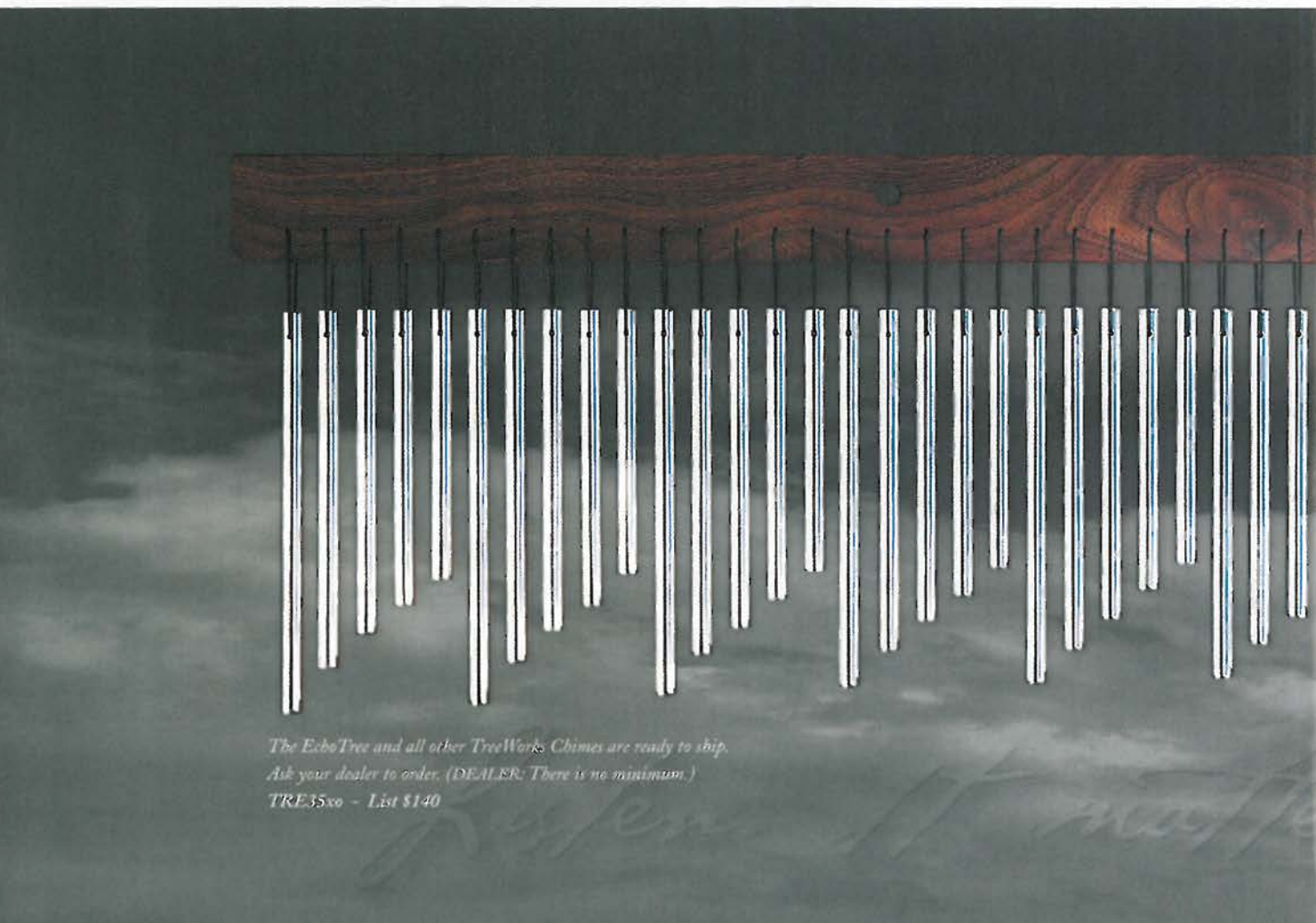
Michael Bettine presented an excellent three-part series on self-promotion in the October, November, and December 2004 issues of *MD*. Refer to them for a detailed look at the subject. We'll just hit the high points here.

Networking. Develop a network of professionals and colleagues whose work interrelates with your own. These can include other musicians, members of the press, leaders in the arts and entertainment communities, lawyers with an interest in helping small businesses, and so on. Over time, you'll help each other be successful.

Résumé and bio. As people get interested in hiring you to teach, produce, engineer, or speak, they will want to see your credentials. Prepare a professional résumé that lists relevant work, skills, and education, along with a one-page narrative of your most important accomplishments.

"I EARN A LIVING OUTSIDE THE BOX. IT'S NOT ABOUT WAITING FOR SOMEONE TO CALL AND SIGN YOU TO A THIRTY-WEEK TOUR."

ZIG WAJLER



Business card. Create a business card with your name, phone number, email address, Web site (if you have one), and your profession (teacher, composer, engineer, motivational speaker, etc.). Cards can be printed inexpensively at most large office-supply stores. Having a card designed and printed at a print shop is more expensive, but it will generate a more distinctive look.

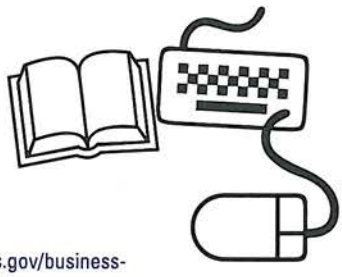
Fliers. Even in this digital age, fliers carefully placed in music stores, coffee shops, bookstores, and other such venues can still help spread the word about your work.

Web site. A Web site can provide potential clients with your résumé or bio, an overview of the classes and workshops you teach, a review of your work as an engineer or producer, and access to related merchandise that you sell. A Web site can also inform interested parties about your upcoming schedule.

Your site must look professional, work efficiently, and be kept up to date. If you have Web design experience and enjoy maintaining a site, then you can manage this yourself. If not, hire someone who has the necessary skills. (Better yet, barter for drum lessons.)

Mailing list. The Internet allows you to maintain a mailing list for very little

Additional Resources



Career Exploration

Career Solutions For Creative People.
Dr. Ronda Ormont. Allworth Press/
New York, NY. 2001.

Zen And The Art Of Making A Living: A Practical Guide To Creative Career Design.
Laurence G. Boldt. Penguin Books. 1999.

Music Business Development

How To Make Money Performing In Schools.
Silcox Productions/Orient, WA. 1996.

Networking In The Music Business.
MIX Books/Vallejo, CA. 2000.

www.sba.gov.
United States Small Business Administration site.

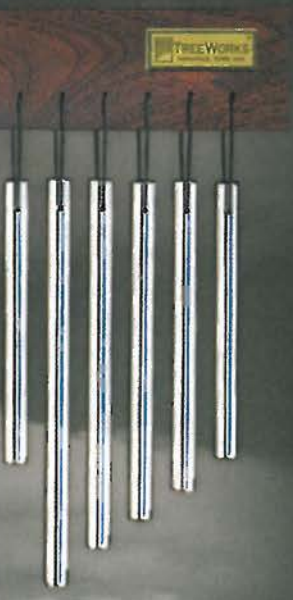
www.irs.gov/business-es/small/.
Internal Revenue Service site.

http://newslink.org/.
A site that lists print and broadcast media by location; useful for promoting your work.

Health Insurance

www.afm.org. American Federation Of Musicians site.

www.actorsfund.org/ahirc/. Artists' Health Insurance Resource Center; part of The Actors' Fund, but relevant to all self-employed creative professionals.



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money. Most of the people on your list can be kept up to date by email. A monthly note that lists upcoming classes, workshops, studio projects, speaking engagements, gigs, and press coverage will be enough to remind people about you and your work.

Create your initial list with names of friends, family, teachers, and fellow musicians. If you give classes or workshops, always pass around a clipboard with a sign-up sheet. Every time you take on a new project, add the client to your list. Past and current clients are among your best resources for referrals. Keeping them up to date will likely bring you new work.

Press Coverage. Coverage in newspapers and magazines is free publicity. Preview articles about your workshops or upcoming release can spread the word to thousands of people who aren't on your mailing list. You can also use press clippings in your promotional kit to further establish your credibility.

The Business Of The Business

Accurate and organized record keeping is an important foundation for your business. Easy-to-use software is readily available to help you track your income and expenses. You can also evaluate your various income sources, in order to determine whether certain sources are more lucrative during specific times of the year. This will help you decide where to put your energies in the future.

Keeping good records will also help you deal with tax matters. As a self-employed individual, you'll have to pay quarterly income taxes. Balancing this is the fact that, as the owner of a small business, any reasonable expense that you incur while running your business will be completely or partially deductible. This includes musical equipment, sheet music and books, publications, instrument repair, travel, and office supplies. Keeping receipts for the dozen drumsticks you just bought, or the postage fees for the press kits you just mailed, may seem like a hassle. But you may save yourself hundreds of dollars in taxes if you have a good record of your expenses.

If you're absolutely terrible at record keeping, you may want to hire an accountant to help. In addition, many schools and community arts organizations provide small business support, either in the form of classes or low-cost advice from local business professionals. And don't forget that, despite their bad-guy image, the local IRS office can also provide valuable information.

Finally, keep in mind that if you're self-employed, you'll need to provide your own health insurance. Most musicians who don't have health insurance through a spouse or partner purchase it through local artists groups, the musicians union, or their local chamber of commerce.

Conclusion

If you're considering starting your own drumming-related business, you're probably motivated by the same creative energy and independent spirit that first spurred your interest in music. The discipline that drove you to practice those paradiddles will help you to network and keep good records. And the perseverance that got you through difficult lessons and demanding gigs will help you get through slow business periods, when you must think of new promotional strategies or perhaps new twists on what you have to offer. The entrepreneurial life is a challenging one, but it offers tremendous creative freedom and career autonomy.

"The biggest challenge," says Jim Donovan, "is that every decision, every action, comes from and is directed by me. Although having all that responsibility and control is wonderful, it's also a little frightening. If things don't go right, there's nobody else to blame. But if everything goes well, you can tap dance to yourself. Running your own business is like finding the perfect drum part to a song. If it's not working, you change it until it does. You'll know it when you hear it."

Harriet L. Schwartz is a frequent contributor to Modern Drummer. *She is also the career consultant for the School Of Music at Carnegie Mellon University, where she teaches a course called Career Strategies For Musicians.*

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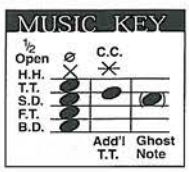
Papa Roach's *Dave Buckner*

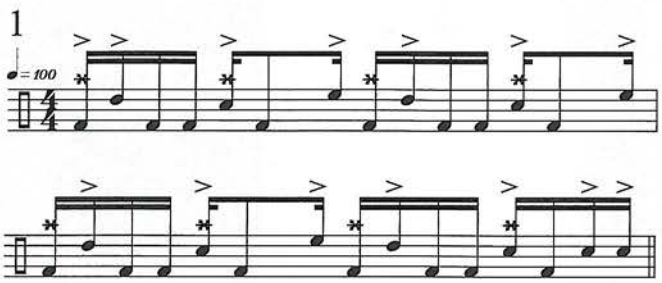
Getting Away With Murder

by Ed Breckenfeld

Papa Roach serves up another smash with their fourth full-length album, *Getting Away With Murder*. With the title track leading the way, the huge sound from this alt-metal quartet is ruling modern rock radio once again. Dave Buckner's powerful and perfectly designed drum patterns contribute mightily to the impact of the album. Here are a few examples.

"Blood (Empty Promises)"

Buckner puts a nice personal touch on the classic paradiddle beat by moving some of the offbeats from the snare drum to his toms. (0:42)

1



"Not Listening"

Toms play an important role in this driving groove as well. Play the snare notes in the second and fourth beats of the measure as double strokes, and use alternating sticking for the two tom hits. (2:38)

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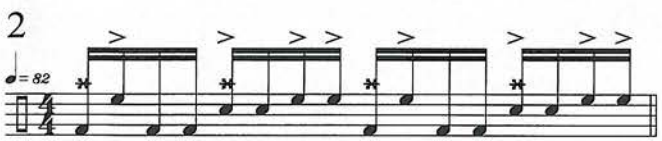

"Stop Looking/Start Seeing"

The phrasing in Dave's chorus beat from this track creates a great feeling of movement. (0:37)

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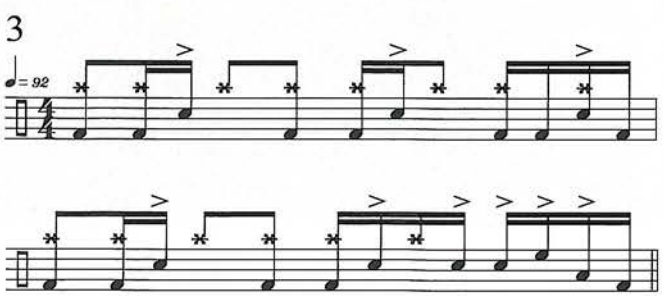

"Getting Away With Murder"

The groove throughout this hit single relies on an accented quarter-note pulse inside the 8th-note hi-hat pattern. Ghost notes add to the dynamic range of the pattern. (0:30)

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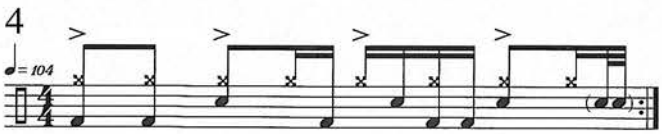
"Scars"

This chorus beat features an interesting turnaround in its second measure. (0:48)

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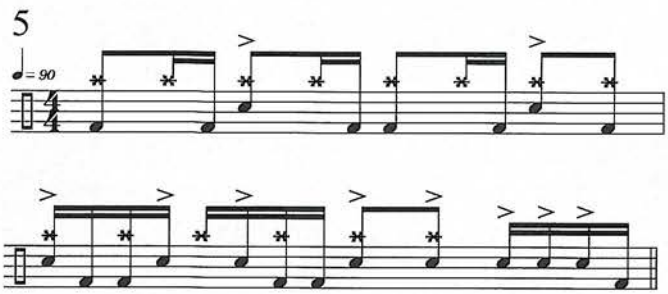
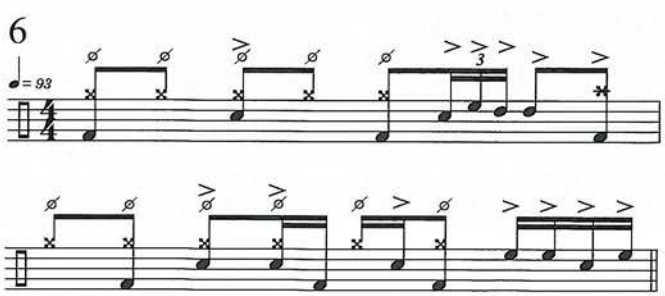


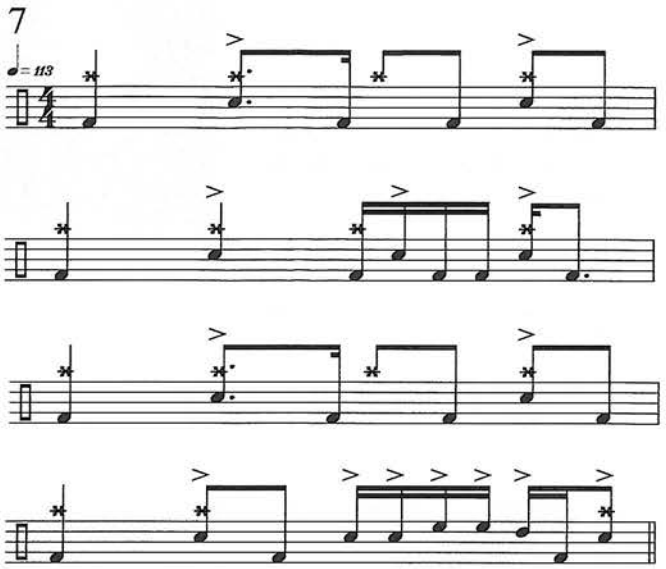
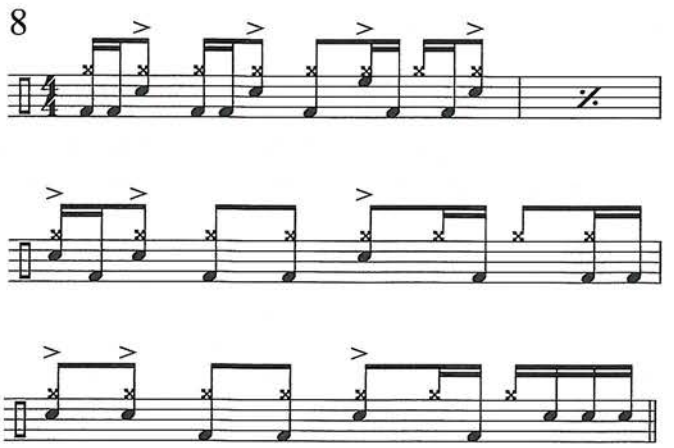
"Sometimes"

Here's a smooth little triplet setup for an offbeat crash, leading into a syncopated section. (2:08)

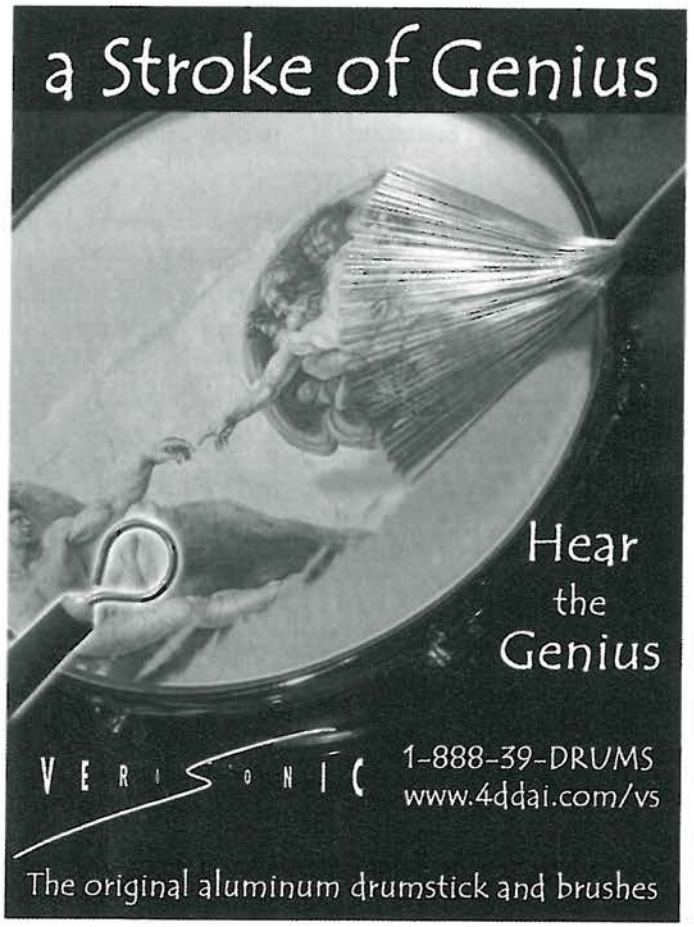
6

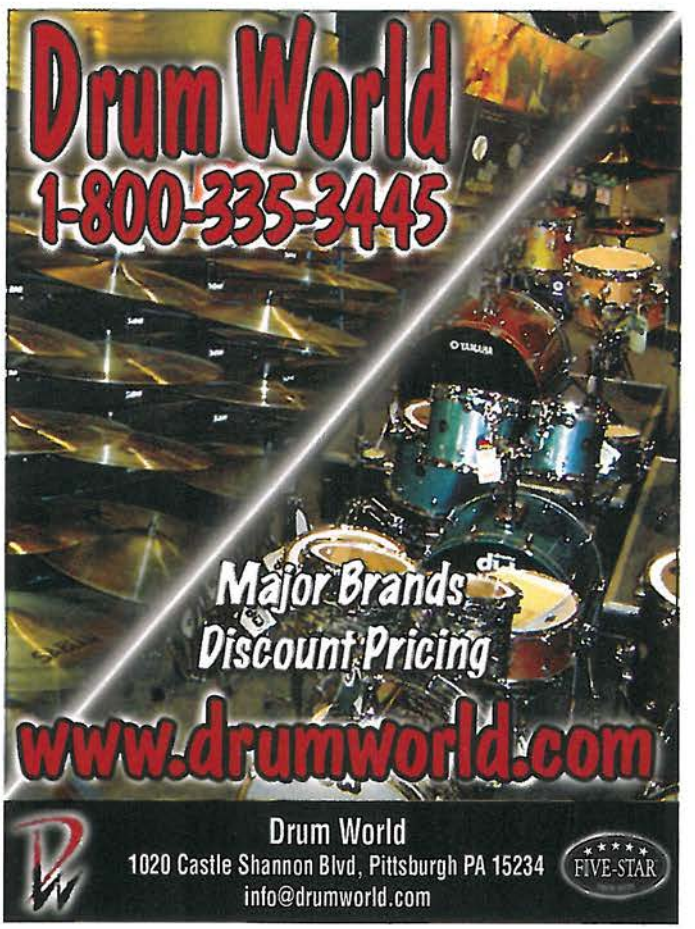


"Tyranny Of Normality"

This song opens with a catchy heavy guitar riff matched by Dave's drum pattern. (0:00)

In one of the coolest beats on the album, Buckner double-times the song's verse, and then turns the beat around in the third and fourth bars. (0:17)

You can contact Ed Breckenfeld at www.edbreckenfeld.com.

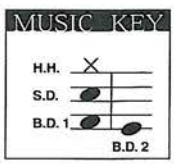
MD Radio





Double Bass Beats

Part 6: Non-Continuous Foot Patterns With Awkward Entrances

by Rod Morgenstein

The overwhelming majority of double bass playing involves the left foot following the right, or sandwiching the left foot between two rights, i.e. RLRL or RLR. In this manner, the left foot is essentially playing a supportive role, or you might say, "following the leader."

Although it may not seem like a tall order, initially having the left foot play on the "e" or the "a" of the beat (1**E**&**A**) without the right foot preceding it can be very awkward. However, the reward for increasing the left foot's independence, strength, and control will be an expanded range of syncopated rhythmic possibilities.

The following examples are based on one specific left-foot "awkward entrance" rhythm, namely "e&a," and are designed to bring awareness to the left foot's valuable potential. All of the exercises are in 4/4. However, Examples 15 and 16 use a five-note grouping approach, which definitely adds a further challenge. (The five-note grouping consists of three successive 16th notes played on the bass drums followed by two 16th-note rests.)

Remember, as was discussed in previous articles, the general rule to follow in order to keep the feet consistent is to play all quarter notes and 8th notes with the right foot and all the e's and a's (upbeat 16ths) with the left foot. And a quarter-note or 8th-note ride pattern will be determined by the tempo at which the example is played.

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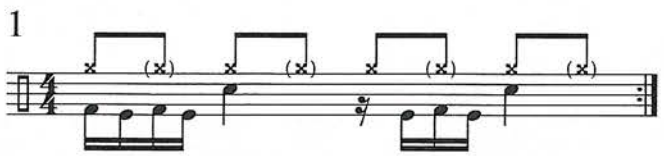

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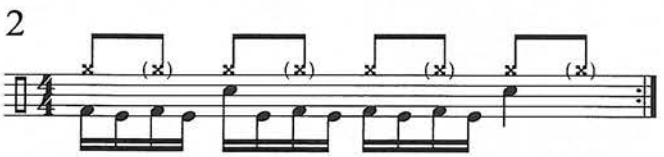

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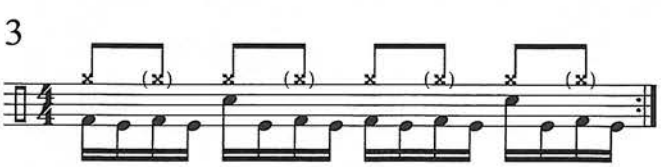

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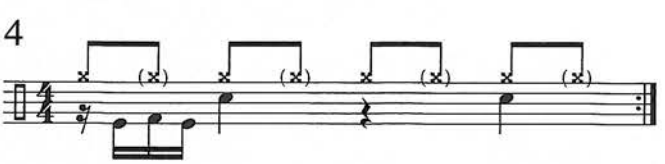

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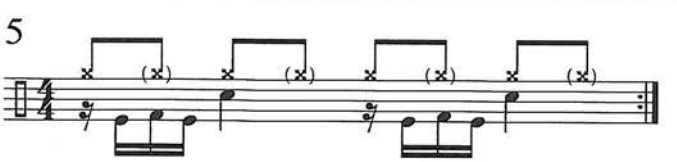

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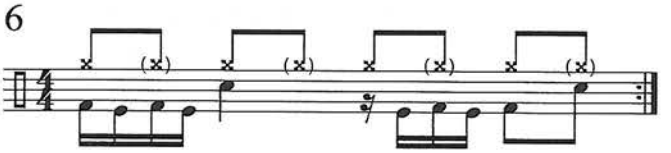

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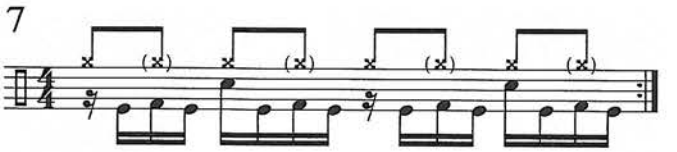

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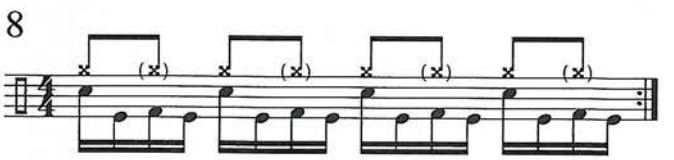

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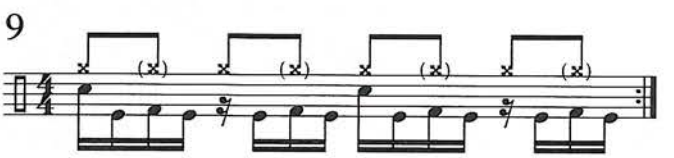

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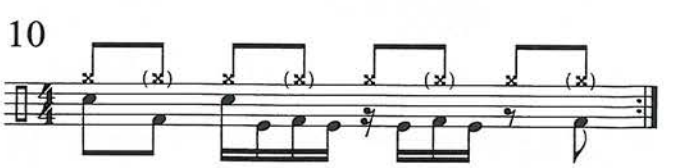

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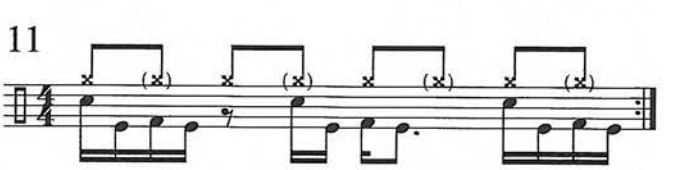
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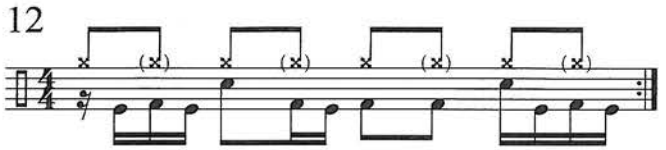
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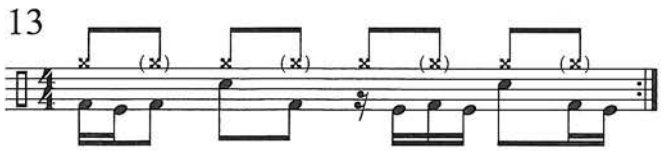

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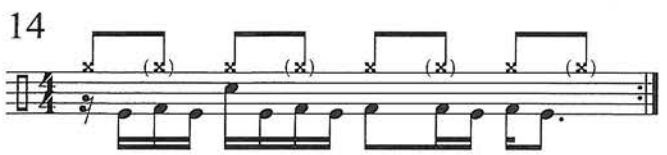

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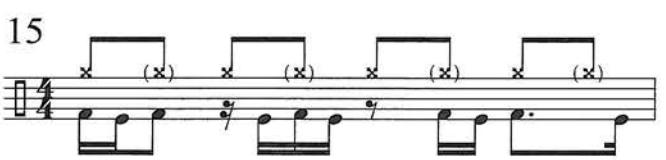

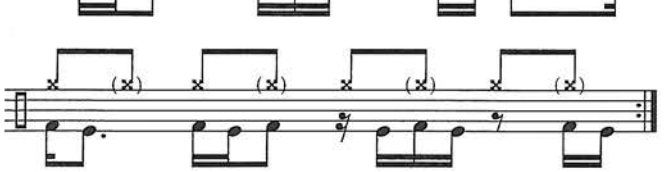

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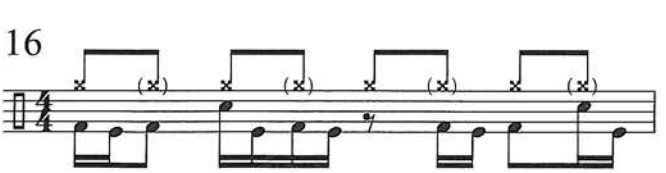
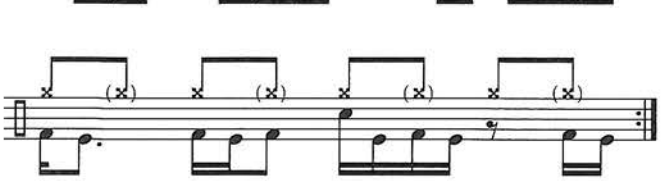
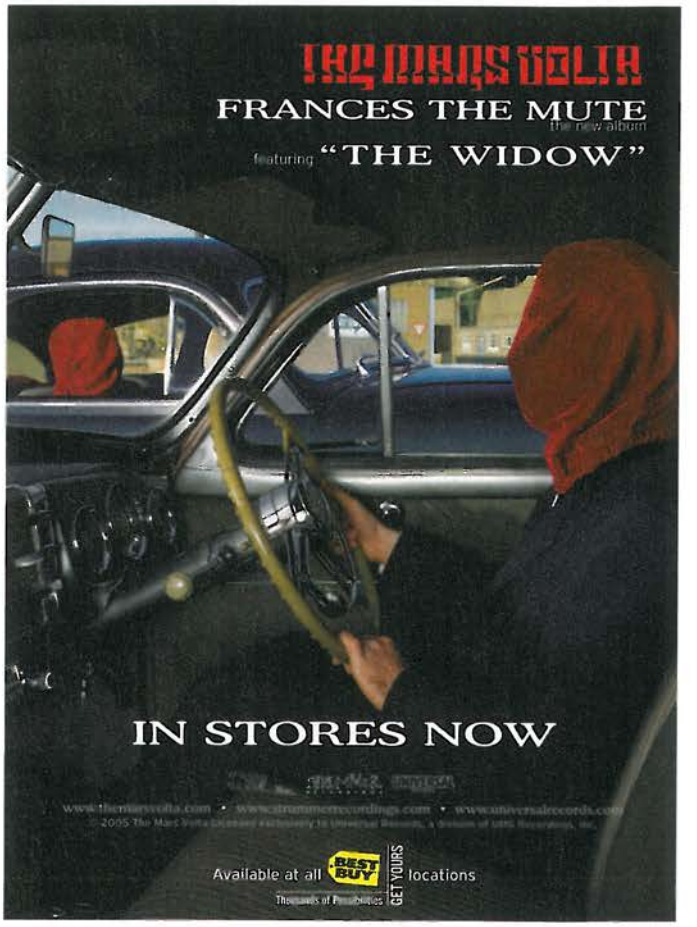


Next month we'll look at other "awkward entrances," which will further enhance the rhythmic potential of your left foot. See you then!



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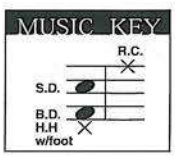
Creative Coordination

Part 1: Four-Way Coordination With Offbeat Ostinatos

by Ari Hoenig

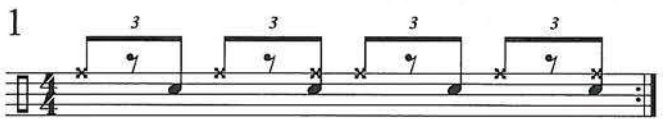


I've always thought that repetition is the root of composition. What this means is, if you play a phrase and then repeat it, it will give the phrase meaning. This works even if your phrase is to crumple a piece of paper, play some drums, crumple another piece of paper, play some more drums, and—you guessed it—crumple a third piece of paper. *Voila*, you have music, or at least some form of art.

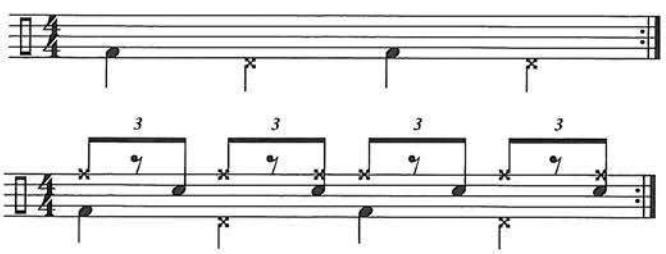
Working with ostinatos gives you a firm musical foundation on which to build. The goal here is to take one musical idea or phrase and thoroughly explore the possibilities it has to offer. It's also very useful for developing four-way coordination.

For this article we'll use offbeats as the ostinato, along with the jazz ride pattern. The other two limbs will improvise. We'll start out with the ostinato pattern on the snare drum. Practice these examples starting at a slow tempo, somewhere around quarter note = 70. Play four bars of time and then the exercise for four bars.

Snare Drum/Ride Cymbal Ostinato:

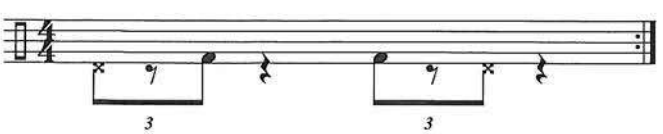
1

Now we'll add the "melodies" to the ostinato. Here's the first melody alone, followed by the same melody combined with the ostinato, so you can see how the two work together.

2



Here are a few more melodies to be played along with the ostinato.

3



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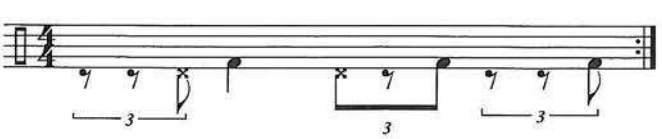

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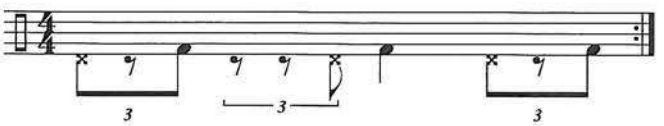

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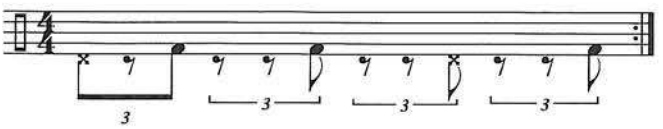
Bass Drum/Ride Cymbal Ostinato:

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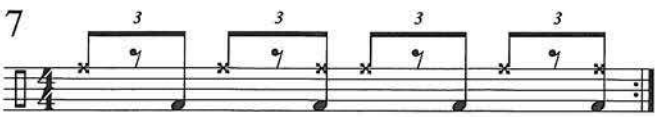

Try the following melodies with the bass drum ostinato.

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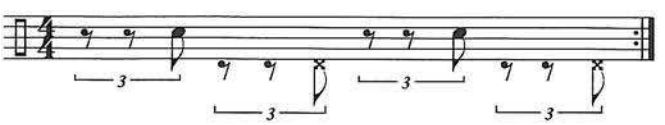

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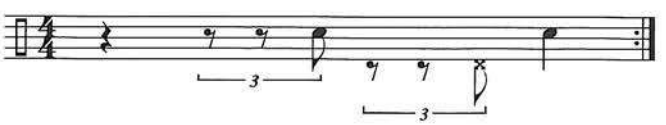
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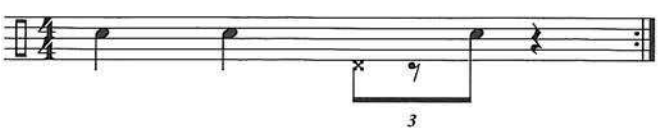

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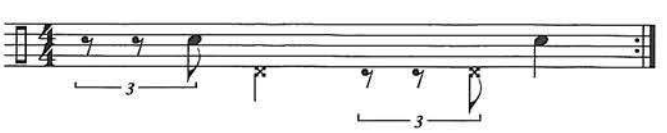

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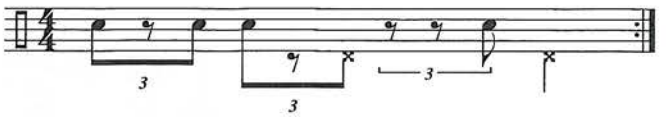

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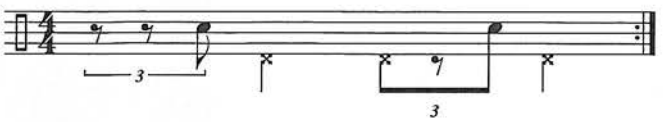

Hi-Hat/Ride Cymbal Ostinato:

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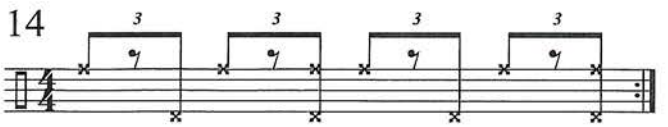

Here are the melodies to play with the ostinato.

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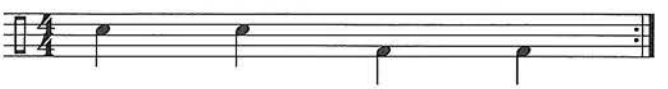

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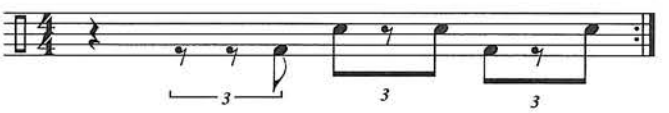
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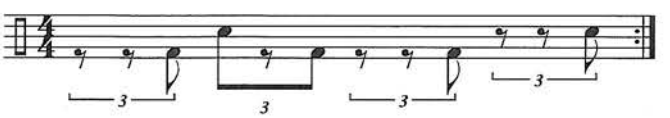

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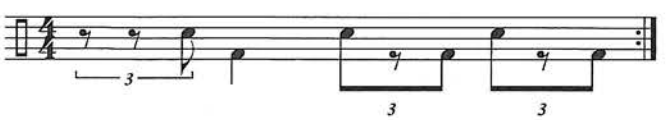

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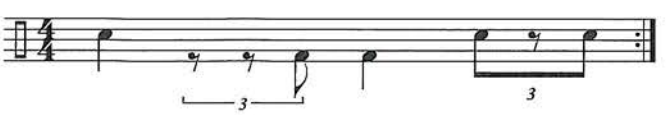

Next month we'll expand on this idea by investigating melodies based on quarter-note triplets.

Ari Hoenig is a top New York jazz drummer. He currently works with Joshua Redman, Kenny Werner, Wayne Krantz, Jean-Michel Pilc, Seamus Blake, and Dave Kikoski.

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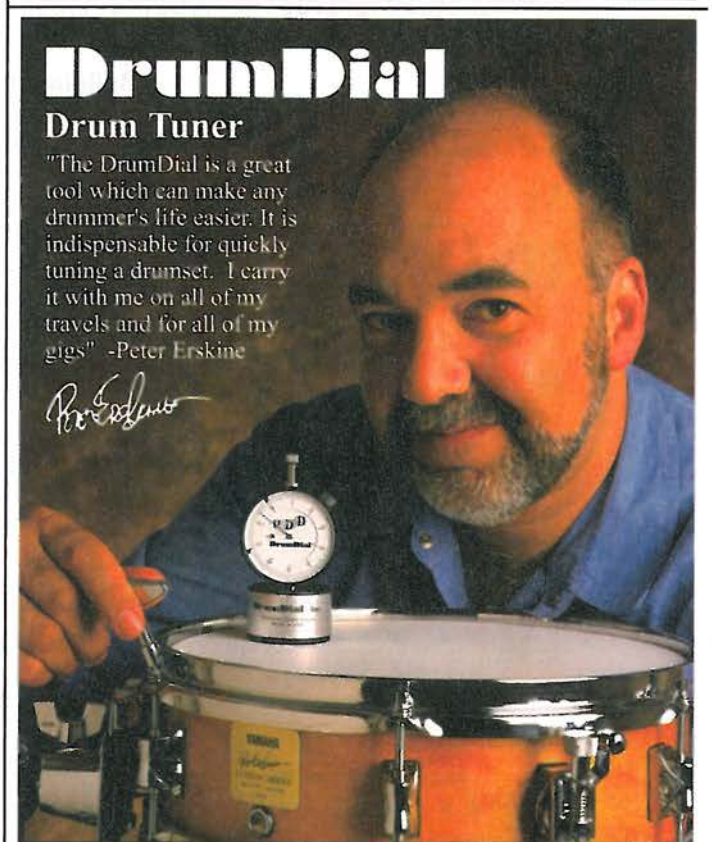

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The Six-Stroke Roll

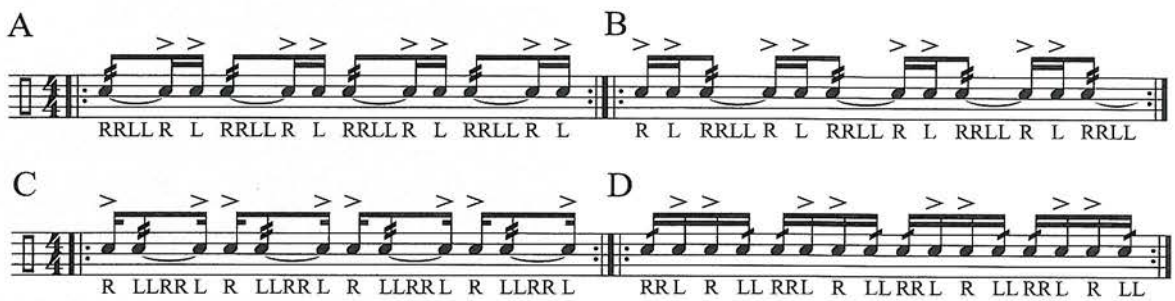
Building Blocks For Great Hands

by Chet Doboe

One of the coolest effects a drummer can pull off sounds like one person is playing a machine-gun roll on the snare drum while someone else pounds out a barrage of accents on the snare, toms, or cymbals. The drive and energy of the sustained roll combines with the "storytelling" of the accents to create one big WOW.

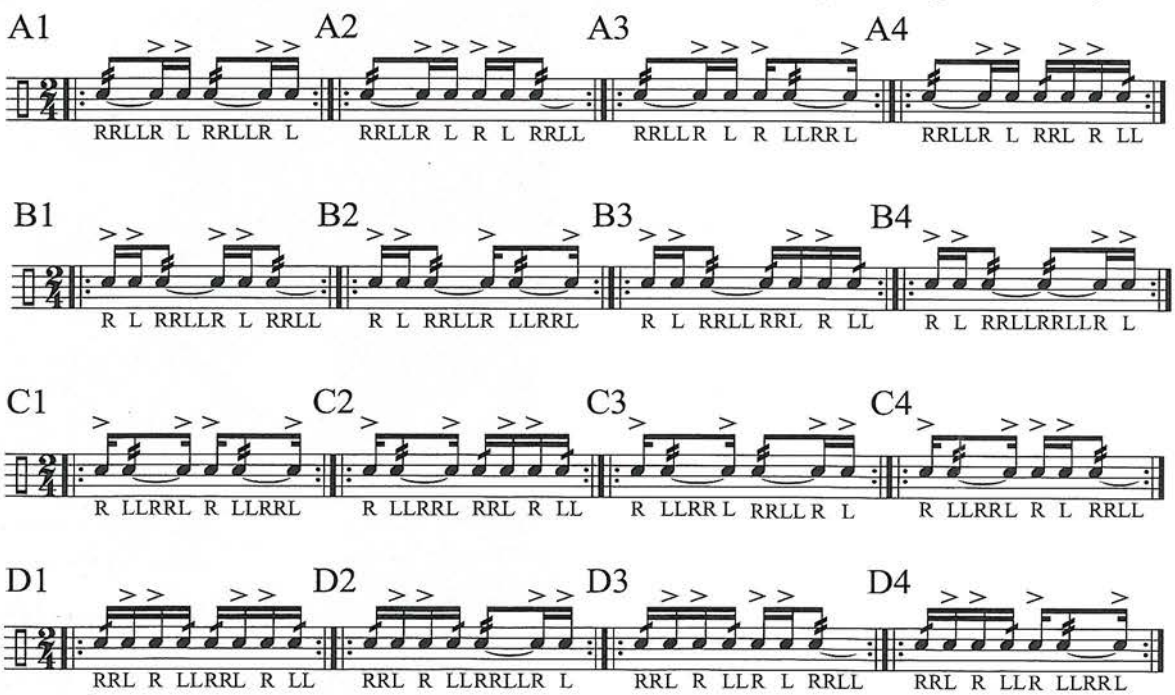
The six-stroke roll is a great pattern for building some fun and impressive sustained roll ideas. The following four versions of the six-stroke roll are the building blocks for creative roll composition. Individually, they are quite effective, especially if you maintain a well-defined dynamic contrast between the doubles and the accents.

Building Blocks



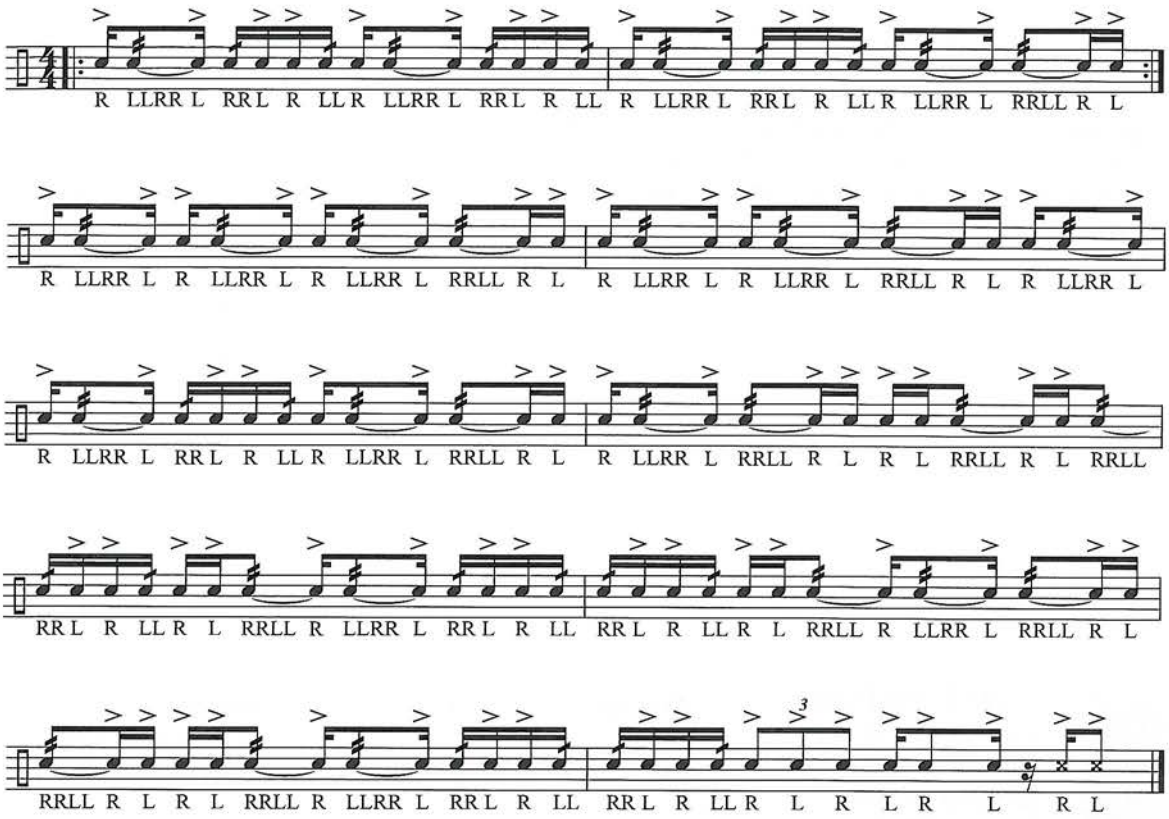
Building Block Combos

The following chart lays out all of the possible combinations in 2/4, pairing one count of each building block with all four variations. It's an organized system that crystallizes the options for creating interesting sustained roll patterns.



Soloing With The Six-Stroke Roll

Here's a short piece that uses the building blocks to create a musical statement. Once you have this solo down, experiment voicing the accents on the toms and cymbals, as well as the snare. Finally, see what you can come up with by combining the building blocks to create your own phrases and solos.



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Drum Lessons On The Small Screen

12 Cool DVDs For Beginners

by Mike Haid

One of the best ways for a beginning drummer (of any age) to improve his or her skills is to study with top professional players and instructors from around the globe. What's that you say? You can't afford private lessons with such drumming stars? Not to worry. These days, a wealth of drumming history, world-class experience, and education can be accessed on a single plastic disc.

Many top performers and educators offer DVD packages that cover a lifetime of study and insight. Additionally, as DVDs have become the format of choice, several excellent instructional videos originally released on VHS are now available in the newer format.

Most of today's best DVDs for beginners offer advice that ranges from how to set up and tune your drums to learning your first beats and reading drum music. Many of these discs explain the name of each piece of the drumkit and what that particular piece is used for. They go on to discuss how to hold the sticks, various grips, and foot-pedal techniques. From there, it's time to learn to read drum music and count the notes.

Once you've got all of the above under your belt, it's on to learning grooves, fills, rudiments, accents, ghost notes, and various hi-hat techniques. Many DVDs also include special features, such as downloadable and printable educational materials and Internet connectivity with links to even more instructional information.

Of course, nothing will ever replace the benefits of one-on-one private instruction with a qualified drum instructor. But having a DVD to refer to anywhere and anytime at the push of a button can make learning much more convenient, efficient, and cost-effective.

This month we've compiled for you beginners a list of some of today's best entry-level DVDs. If you're ready to expand your awareness of the amazing world of drumming, these DVDs will steer you in the right direction. Grab that remote and let's check 'em out.

Learn Basic Drums

Instructor: Patrick Treadway
DVD with booklet,
Warner Bros., 2003
List price: $16.95.
Running time: 60 min.

Coverage: Gear description, set-up, and placement; grip, stick technique, basic reading, music theory, bass drum/foot technique, building grooves, and practice concepts. Includes play-along tracks and DVD-ROM extras.

Comments: Disney Channel–type acting and production geared for kids. Thorough and self-explanatory. Story line: Mr. H.E.L.P. magically appears and teaches Ben how to set up and play his new drumset. Lots of valuable extra features.

You Can Teach Yourself Drums

Instructor: James Morton
90-page book with DVD,
Mel Bay, 1990
List price: $19.95.
Running time: 60 min.

Coverage: Focuses mainly on reading and playing rock grooves, shuffles, and blues patterns.

Comments: Comprehensive, well written, and easy to follow. DVD offers various examples from the book but with limited camera angles of the instructor performing. No-frills, user-friendly patterns and play-along charts.

Drums From Day One

Instructor: Jim Payne
48-page book with DVD
and CD, Mel Bay, 1988
List price: $29.95.
Running time: 60 min.

Coverage: Focuses on counting and reading using vocal sounds for each instrument. Reading covers rock, blues, shuffle, and funk styles. Also covered are open hi-hat, fills, and song structure.

Comments: Unique method of vocalizing rhythms. Multi-camera angles on DVD. Instructor is well spoken. Most examples from the book are found on the accompanying CD.

Play Drums Today

Instructor: Scott Schroedl
DVD with booklet,
Hal Leonard, 2003
List price: $14.95.
Running time: 66 min.

Coverage: Set-up, gear description, playing techniques, basic grooves in various styles, and reading.

Comments: Well produced. Multiple camera angles on the DVD.

Rock Drumset Basics

Instructor: Danny Gottlieb
book with DVD,
Mel Bay, 2003
List price: $9.95.
Running time: 30+ min.

Coverage: Stick technique, reading, counting, beats, fills, coordination, and independence.

Comments: Valuable insights from a world-class player. However, the camera never shows the instructor's foot on the bass pedal.

The Ultimate Beginner Series—Drum Basics Parts 1 & 2

Instructor: Sandy Gennaro
DVD, Warner Bros., 2001
List price: $19.95.
Running time: 120 min.

Coverage: Contains original *Step One* and *Step Two* VHS videos on one DVD. Covers counting, reading, set-up, stick technique, and basic rock beats.

Comments: Nice production, interesting commentary, and good common-sense info.

Ultimate Beginner Xpress: An Introduction To Musical Styles—Drums

Instructor: Lee Levin
DVD, Warner Bros., 2002
List price: $9.95.
Running time: 90+ min.

Coverage: Counting, set-up, stick technique, basic rock beats, fills, and much more.

Comments: An emphasis on entertainment results in scattered information. Lots of extra features help make up for the lack of focus and the silly dialog in the main format. Overall, the DVD contains valuable learning information and lots of extra features.

Starter Series—Beginning Drum Volume One

Instructor: Tim Pedersen
DVD with booklet,
Hal Leonard, 1999
List price: $9.95.
Running time: 30+ min.

Coverage: Drum, hi-hat, cymbal, and stick techniques; counting, reading, set-up, basic rock grooves, and fills.

Comments: Favorable production, interesting commentary, and good common-sense info.

Starter Series—Beginning Drum Volume Two

Instructor: Tim Pedersen
DVD with booklet,
Hal Leonard, 1999
List price: $9.95.
Running time: 30+ min.

Coverage: Fills and phrases, accents, rudiments, funk and shuffle grooves, and motion exercises.

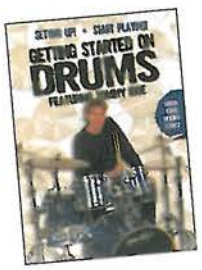
Comments: Favorable production, interesting commentary, and good common-sense info.

Snare Drum Basics

Instructor: Bob Breithaupt
DVD with booklet, Hal Leonard/Hudson Music, 2002
List price: $14.95.
Running time: 35 min.

Coverage: Grips, basic strokes, dynamics, stroke combinations, rudiments, specialty sounds, and tuning.

Comments: Excellent production, interesting commentary, and good common-sense info for snare drum and overall stick technique.

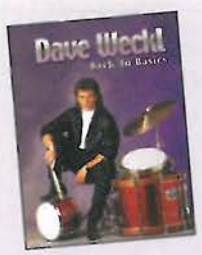


Getting Started On Drums

Instructor: Tommy Igoe
DVD, Hal Leonard/Hudson Music, 2001
List price: $29.95.
Running time: 120+ min.

Coverage: Set-up, tuning, stick selection and technique, coordination, grooves, fills, and lots of extras.

Comments: Excellent production, interesting commentary, and good common-sense info for setting up and playing drumset for beginners. Contains lots of valuable extra features not found on many other beginner instructionals.



Dave Weckl Back To Basics

Instructor: Dave Weckl
DVD, Warner Bros., 2003
List price: $24.95.
Running time: 72 min.

Coverage: Hand and foot techniques, set-up, tuning, and practice.

Comments: Enhanced format from the original VHS video. Top-notch sound and production. Not exclusively for beginners, applicable to all levels of playing. Inspiring performances and world-class insight from a legendary player.

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The Percussion Odyssey Of Steve Hubback

Dreaming Up Wondrous Sounds

by Michael Bettine

What do percussionists Evelyn Glennie, Paolo Vinaccia, Marilyn Mazur, Alessio Riccio, Björn Frykland, Paal Nielsen Love, and many others have in common? They all play percussion sculptures handmade by Steve Hubback. The nomadic Hubback was born and raised in Wales, but has found himself at various times living in France, Denmark, Norway, and now Iceland, where his wife is from.

Hubback's odyssey started when he was eighteen years old, after seeing the great British free-jazz drummer Tony Oxley. "He really motivated me to work on my drumming," Steve says. "He's still one of the most advanced percussionists." Oxley, as well as the great Italian drummer Andrea Centazzo, opened up Hubback's imagination to drumming being more percussion oriented.

In the mid 1980s, Hubback started playing solo concerts on a small, portable kit he made in Paris. Around 1990, he decided to make his own gong after he happened upon some thin stainless steel discs at a friend's workshop. "I hammered it out on a tree trunk," he says. "Then I heated it over a wood fire. The sound was a powerful roaring whoosh."

Illuminator Cymbal

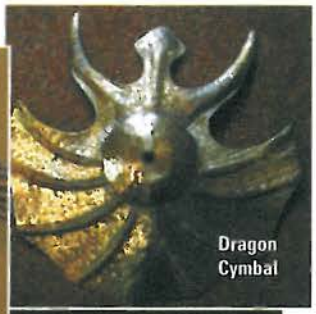
Steve then set out to learn how to forge metal instruments. "A Norwegian blacksmith gave me one lesson," Hubback says. "And a guy at a metal shop in Aarhus, Denmark taught me to mig weld. The rest I learned on my own by doing, and by studying the book by Alex Weygers, *The Complete Modern Blacksmith*."

Steve kept creating instruments, moving onto brass, B6/B8 bronze, and NS12 nickel-silver, often finding suitable metal from recycling yards. As his reputation grew, European percussionists started asking for his instruments, even commissioning special creations.

Without having a "factory," Steve has adapted to making things wherever he's been located. "With basic tools," Hubback says, "I've forged cymbals and gongs on the shore of a Norwegian fjord, on a beach in Denmark, in a garden in Wales, in a shed in Holland, and at various other colorful locations."

The basic process is the ancient craft of hand hammering raw metal. "Nearly all my hammering is done freehand on wood," Steve admits. "Depending on what's being made, I may also hammer on a special anvil. My hammers are 're-forged' from old hammers. I always have beveled edges, never sharp ones. I also have forged special hammers for deep hammering. Heating the sculptures after hammering releases the tension and opens up the sound.

"A lot of tools can be improvised," Hubback continues. "I've used a sledgehammer and also smaller hammers as anvils. With a ball-peen hammer, a tree stump, another larger hammer or even a stone for an anvil, hand sheet cutters, files, and a wood fire, it's possible to work almost anywhere. However, most of my work with stainless steel I cut with a power grinder, which I also use with sanding discs to get the rough edges smoothed and to finish the surface. Stainless is a much heavier material to work with than bronze, brass, or nickel-silver."



"My sculptures and music are all part of an expanding creative process. The sound inspires the forms, and the forms inspire the sounds."

Above: Hubback not only creates these unique instruments, he also performs on them. Right: Steve hard at work, creating his next sculpture/cymbal masterpiece. The process involves an ancient craft of hand hammering raw metal.

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Anthony Roberts, Monitors - Tower of Power

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Travis Wyrick, Producer, Engineer, Mixer - P.O.D., Charlie Daniels, Pillar

"So how does it sound? In a word, impressive. ...and on snare drum, it rocked hard. Overall, there's a clarity and openness to this mic that you don't hear from a lot of dynamics..."
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"On the road I use it with The Dead and Phil Lesh and Friends. At home, I use it at the Phoenix Theatre in Petaluma with every act imaginable. From the top to the bottom, the i-5 sets a new standard!"
Ian DuBois, Monitors - Phil Lesh and Friends, The Dead

"Audix really delivers with the i-5. Performing well in about every application on which I tried it, the i-5 does justice to many sources both on stage and in the studio."
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"During our recent tour, I was very pleased with the results using the i-5 on guitar cabs. The sound was smooth and clear with great presence in the mix. The i-5 is rugged and solid. It qualifies as THE all-purpose dynamic workhorse in any mic collection."
Gary Hartung, FOH - Crosby, Stills & Nash

"The i-5 is an awesome utility mic—it is much tougher and sounds better than the 'old faithful' I am now able to replace."
Dave Rat, Rat Sound

"I've used the same mic on snare drum for recording and live sound applications for 30 years. I've tried other mics from time to time but always returned to the old favorite. Recently, I tried the Audix i-5. No matter what style of music, the i-5 sounds great and now has become my new choice for snare drum."
Tom Edmonds, Engineer - Lenny Kravitz
"I have dreamed of this day—I can now retire the last of my Shure SM57's. Now that I've been exposed to the future, why would I want to live in the past?"
Eugene "Gino" Mulcahy, Lead Audio Engineer - Mohegan Sun

"This mic is slammin'! And if you're tired of having the cap of your snare mic being blown into pieces from a heavy stick hit—you'll love the i-5!"
Anthony Roberts, Monitors - Tower of Power

"On guitar amps the i-5, compared to the 57, was less hyped in the high mids, but had a fuller overall tone...I'm really digging using the i-5 and will be buying the review mics I was sent, if that tells you anything."
Larry Crane, Tape-Op Magazine

"The i-5 is very impressive as a bass mic. It handles the SPL's and captures the clarity of the notes while still maintaining the warmth of the low end. It's a great new tool."
Deanne Franklin, FOH - Tom Waits

"With the i-5 on my snare drum, there's just no going back. I've just started using it on guitar with very good results there too. The i-5; it's my new little weapon."
Neil Citron, Head Engineer - The Mothership

"The i-5 is truly a multi-purpose microphone. It sounds great on a wide variety of sources, but it particularly shines on snare drums and toms...Sounds like a winner in my book."
Mark Parsons, Modern Drummer

"The i-5 is more than an impressive upgrade to my usual snare and guitar cab mic—it's a big leap forward."
Ed Tree, Studio Engineer - The Spencer Davis Group

"Who needs a condenser when you can get this sound out of a dynamic. Audix has again come up with a winning microphone."
John Gatski, Pro Audio Review

"The best thing to happen to snare drum since Charlie Watts!"
Paul Hagar, FOH - American Hi-Fi

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Percussion Today

Hubback has created a unique world of instruments that are more sculptural, often inspired by dreams and nature. He's made gongs shaped like dragon wings and ocean creatures. His cymbals and gongs frequently have six or eight sides with hammered spines emanating from the center. He's even made creations in the shape of birds and a cow's head.

"My Dragon cymbal sculptures were originally inspired by a very vivid dream I had in the mid-'90s," Steve explains. "The Illuminators started as arcing eight-sided cymbals/gongs. I found that ten arcing sides works best, and that the arced ridge hammering gives a harmonious visual form and contributes to a very unusual sound. Also, the ridges give strength, which means I can forge them very thin. That also opens up interesting possibilities.

"The Vulture sculpture was a recent commission by 'The Birdman Of alkiJazz,' Tony Orrell, a great English drummer. I'd been working on a few bird-like ideas and was happy to take this commission. The Vulture really worked out well. I almost kept it. I recently forged a Raven for myself."

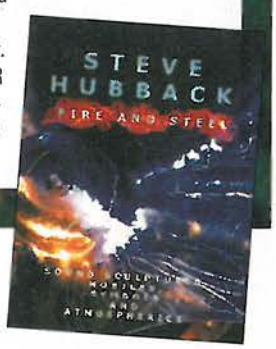
Other commissions include a sculpture for classical percussionist Evelyn Glennie. "Evelyn was interested in a sculpture that I had made for my group Metal Moves. I changed it a bit and remade the steel sculpture so that it can be taken apart for transport. Some of the bronze and brass instruments that hang from it were specially made for this sculpture, like the Shield gong and Dragons Wing gong. It has a kind of medieval fairytale atmosphere to it."

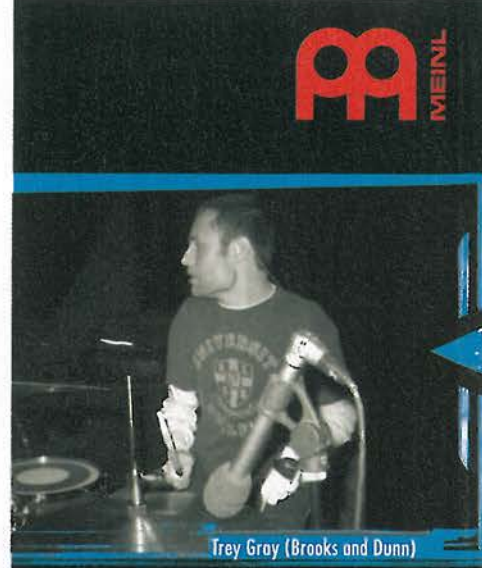
Then there's the fantastic one-meter (39") cymbal for Paolo Vinaccia in Norway. "Paolo has been into rather large bass drums for some time, and he had asked me about giant cymbals years ago," Steve explains. "So when I got back into working with stainless, I knew it could be done. I cut out the disc, prepared the surface, and hammered the cymbal into shape, finishing it all within a week—and in minus 10°C. There is no heating in that part of my workshop. It was so cold it

Sonic Sculptures
Steve Hubback's Recordings

Artist	Album
Steve Hubback	Best Kept Secret
Steve Hubback	Live In Reykjavik
Metal Moves	Runecarver
Metal Moves	Illuminator
Metal Moves	Three Wishes
Frode Gjerstad and Steve Hubback	Demystify
Steve Hubback and Ad Peijnenburg	And Other Stuff
Recreator	Solar Sahara
Dirck Wachtelaer, Steve Hubback, and Trevor Taylor	Kortrijk Percussion Project
Jörd Bifast	And The Earth Moved
Dirck Wachtelaer's Vanishing Pictures	As Lit From Within
Steve Hubback and Erik Qvick	Wondrous Sounds That Fill The Air
Steve Hubback	The Quest
Tony Moore and Steve Hubback	Forge
Frode Gjerstad and Steve Hubback	Metals And Wood

All of these releases are available from FMR Records (www.fmr-records.com). Also available from Soundworld, through FMR Records, is the book *Fire And Steel*, which features over one hundred twenty photos, stories, statements, and comments about Hubback's works.





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took almost three times longer to get the heat from the propane torch into that cymbal.

"Last year," Hubback goes on, "the great Swedish drummer, Björn Frykland of Freak Kitchen, asked me to create a large cow head sculpture that's based on Freak Kitchen's logo. To make it strong enough and sonorous, I decided that 316L stainless steel would be the way to go. I was so amazed with the results, I started forging other sound sculptures with this alloy and haven't looked back."

Along the way, Steve has kept busy performing as well, playing solo and with other artists. A musical turning point in 1996 was being invited to a Korean percussion festival. "Working in South Korea was a very big awakening," Hubback says. "I worked with Lim Dong Chang and Welshman Tony Brooks in The World Is One ensemble. Chang worked with getting us to breathe and move with the music and to learn about the transmission and release of energy.

"I also met the South Korean master Buddhist drummer Kim Dae Hwan," Steve continues. "He was on a whole different level. When I met him he was about sixty-four and super fit, looking at least twenty years younger. He played solo concerts with four or five sticks and mallets in each hand. I'd never seen anyone play with multi-sticking before. About a year later I tried to play with two sticks in each hand. I then started playing with two small cymbals strapped to each hand—I'd clash them together while playing—with three sticks and mallets in my left hand and one mallet and one stick in my right. This opened up a new way of playing for me. It's an ongoing process of discovery and identity. I'm interested in Shaman drumming, Tibetan, Korean, Chinese, Japanese, and Celtic music—especially the music of Alan Stivell from Bretagne."

Steve's music and sculptures are best heard on the three CDs by his group Metal Moves. "I formed Metal Moves so I could have a group playing exclusively on my creations," he says. "My sculptures and music are all part of an expanding creative process. The sound inspires the forms, and the forms inspire the sounds. I always think visually when composing."

Metal Moves currently consists of Steve with percussionists Birgit Lökke Larsen and Tineke Noordhoek. He met Tineke in the early '90s, and then met Birgit through her. "It's great to work with them," he says, "as they are very inspired and have a really good energy and positive outlook. They also have a deep connection to my creations."

In May of 2004 Hubback founded the first Festival Of Wondrous Sounds in Iceland. Featuring percussionists Trevor Taylor, Erik Qvick, Z'ev, and Metal Moves, the event was recorded and is being released on FMR as *Undraverk*. "I'm working on getting people into more festivals of acoustic, creative percussion and sound sculptures," Hubback says. "There's some interest in France, Holland, and Switzerland. So it will be an ongoing project."

Keeping busy, Steve has recently created and installed three sonorous sculptures for Coed Hills Rural Artspace in Wales. "They're set up on the sculpture trail in the forest," he says. "I've also done nine days of performances and recordings in Iceland with Ad Peijnenburg, and a tour in Holland with him. In December I played with Dietmar Diesner in Germany."

Hubback's work has recently been documented by Welsh filmmaker Tom Swindell, whose *Forged From Dreams* premiered in November 2004 in Cardiff. With all that Steve Hubback is involved in, the question is, where is he heading with his instruments and music? "The magic of all this is that I don't know," he insists. "It's a journey of discovery. Life is full of wonder, and I'm sure the future will be interesting."

For more on Hubback, visit his Web site: http://hubgong.dse.nl/.

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Contemporary

10 Classic Brush Recordings

by John Riley

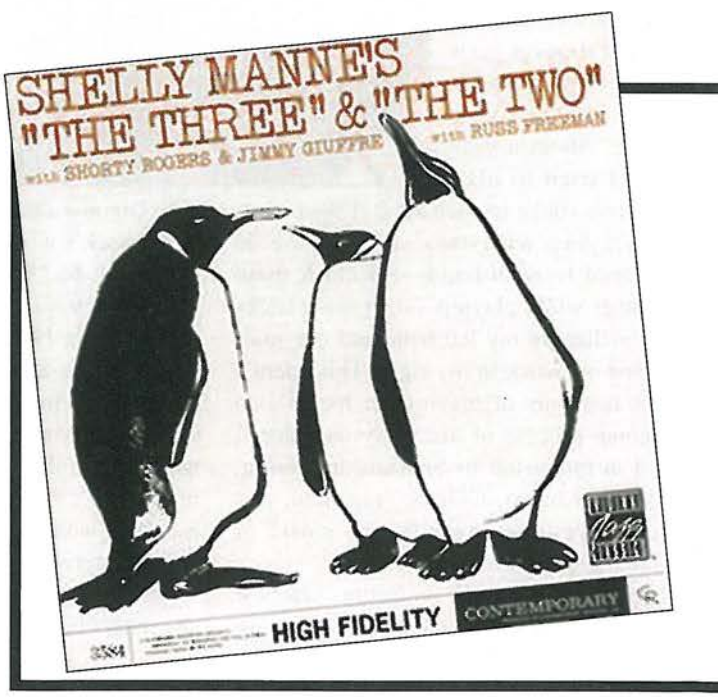
When you hear a recording of someone playing a groove with drumsticks, it's pretty easy to visualize which hand is creating which sound on the kit—either the right hand is playing the cymbal while the left hand is playing the snare drum, or the other way around. Deciphering brush patterns by ear is another matter entirely and, because we all start out playing by copying things from recordings without seeing how the pulse and those sweeping sounds are actually being played, hundreds of different hand combinations have evolved to generate time with brushes.

Though many drummers avoid brushes, the main elements of playing with brushes are the same as with sticks: You must play in time, know the song, help bring the music to life, and get a good sound. How that sound is created is the only difference. In this column we'll discuss the main components of brush playing within a list of classic brush performances to check out.

Having stated that there are hundreds of different brush patterns, the great brush players all seem to have come to similar conclusions about how to swing with brushes. Each hand has a distinct roll, with the right hand most often delineating the pulse, like the tip of the stick on the cymbal, and the left hand connecting each pulsation, like the ring of the cymbal. The most common patterns are diagramed in my book, *The Art Of Bop Drumming*.

I used to hear talk of two schools of brush playing—the East Coast school and the West Coast school. The distinction being, the Easterner's brush solos were primarily tap strokes and the solo content was very similar to their soloing with sticks, while the Westerners were known to explore, integrate, and capitalize to a greater degree the legato sweeping motions only possible with brushes.

As you check out these recordings, notice which school each of these drummers fall into. Also, make note of which context drummers prefer to play—with the snares on or off. And remember, if you want to improve your brush playing, the *most* important thing is to take the brushes out of your stick bag and play with them!



The Jo Jones Trio

The Jo Jones Trio

Jo Jones

Recorded in 1959, this album is a great reference point. Papa Jo Jones demonstrates his amazing brush playing on just about every track of this CD. Jo starts the CD showing his beautiful sense of sound and fantastic feel for orchestration on "Sweet Georgia Brown." He begins the song playing with his hands on the snare drum, snares off. Jo switches to brushes for the piano solo—this is a *great* brush sound—and plays brushes on the hi-hat during the bass solo. Then he trades fours playing hands on the drums, and concludes the song as he began it, with his hands during the theme.

Whether playing with brushes or his hands, Jo makes the "point" of each beat very distinct. Playing with brushes, his "connecting" left-hand sweeps are perfectly smooth, without any accentuation. His left hand is definitely playing in time, most often two circles per measure. But by very gently drawing the brush across the drumhead rather than pressing the brush into the head, Jo gets a very smooth sound and the desired glassy transparency.

This entire CD warrants study. Check out "Be-Bop Irishman" for more medium-tempo time playing and hip fours. "Philadelphia Bound" and "I've Got Rhythm" are brisk, and Jo smokes them. (Note the beautiful sound Jo gets on the hi-hat with the brush.) During the chorus after the bass solo on "Little Susie," he plays the snare drum with a brush in his left hand and with the fingers of his right hand. "Close Your Eyes" features a different left-hand pattern during the A sections: Jo stops each circle on beats 1 and 3, so you hear sweeps only from 2-3 and 4-1.

Tommy Flanagan

The Tommy Flanagan Trio Overseas

Elvin Jones

This album, recorded in 1957, features Elvin Jones early in his career, playing brushes throughout. Notice how Elvin's primary time pattern swings and how it flows differently from Jo Jones'—it's not as transparent, and there's a little left-hand push on beats 2 and 4. Listen for his phrasing of the skip note. As opposed to his medium and uptempo phrasing, on ballads, Elvin plays the skip note really close and tight.

Shelly Manne

"The Three" & "The Two"

Shelly Manne

This 1954 recording is an inspiring source of drumming colors, featuring Manne playing primarily brushes. Half the CD is trio: drums, trumpet, and woodwind. The other half is duo: drums and piano. Every track is a gem and, in these intimate settings, Shelly's every move is audible. He shows how a great drummer can be the glue, the spark, the "color" man, and a great soloist in any ensemble. Whether playing with sticks, brushes, mallets, or his hands, Shelly has a great sense of sound, groove, balance, melody, and orchestration.

Ahmad Jamal

But Not For Me

Vernel Fournier

This 1958 recording is another must-have, featuring Vernel Fournier's highly original playing, singular sound, and understated but driving groove. Vernel has come up with a unique drum part for nearly every song, and his brush patterns are musically perfect.

Among the many highlights are "But Not For Me," where Vernel plays the cymbal with a brush in

Oscar Peterson
We Get Requests
Ed Thigpen

Brush master Ed Thigpen's musicianship is captured beautifully on this album from 1965. Check out the hip stick and brush swing-a-nova on "Quiet Nights" and "The Girl From Ipanema," his snappy medium-tempo grooves on "Days Of Wine And Roses," "People," "You Look Good To Me," and "D & E," great ballad playing on "My One And Only Love," and the incredible medium slow groove on "Have You Met Miss Jones?" Ed's books and DVDs are also priceless sources for brush ideas.

Also Check Out

Artist	Recording	Drummer
Gene Krupa	"Wire Brush Stomp"	Gene Krupa
Mel Lewis	"Tiptoe"	Mel Lewis
Dave Brubeck	"It's A Raggy Waltz"	Joe Morello
	"King For A Day"	
Ella Fitzgerald And Louis Armstrong	Ella & Louis	Buddy Rich
Trio Da Paz	Brazil From The Inside	Duduka Da Fonseca
Hubert Laws	"Airegin"	Steve Gadd
Art Pepper	"Waltz Me Blues"	Philly Joe Jones
Bud Powell	"John's Abbey"	Philly Joe Jones
Miles Davis	"All Blues"	Jimmy Cobb
Tony Bennett	"Crazy Rhythm"	Chico Hamilton

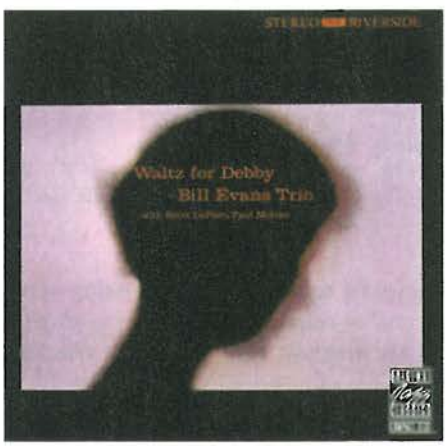
Further Study

Kenny Clark, Billy Higgins, Marty Morell, Louie Bellson, Joe La Barbara, Peter Erskine, Joey Baron, Clayton Cameron, Adam Nussbaum, Dennis Mackrel, Ed Soph, Joe Hunt, Han Bennik, Lewis Nash, Ben Riley, Denzil Best, and Jake Hanna

MD Radio — To hear some of the artists mentioned in *Essential Listening*, go to MD Radio at www.moderndrummer.com.

his right hand while playing the "bongo" pattern on the snare drum with a mallet. "Surrey With The Fringe On Top" is a medium up-swinger. During "Moonlight In Vermont," the trio shifts effortlessly between a walking ballad and a 3/4 waltz. Vernel's crisp swing and one-of-a-kind rumba on "Woody 'N You" and "Too Late Now" are really hip. "All The Things You Are" is as super smooth as "Cherokee" is super hot. Also of note are the quarter-note ballad groove on "It Might As Well Be Spring," the hip Latin groove on "I'll Remember April," and the stop and start pattern played on "Sweet And Lovely." Vernel's classic stick and mallet groove from "Poinciana," which every drummer should know, is also on this CD.

The Bill Evans Trio
Waltz For Debbie
Paul Motian



Paul Motian's subtle brush playing with The Bill Evans Trio during 1960 and 1961 still sounds fresh and modern today. Paul's artistry is beautifully captured on this album. On the songs "My Foolish Heart," "Detour Ahead," and "Some Other Time," Paul's approach incorporates measured silences and gentle expressive pulsations

within his sweeping movements to spell out the time; taps are only used in more forceful moments. During "Waltz For Debbie" and "My Romance" Paul really "stirs some soup" to generate great momentum, variety, and power at "whisper" volume.

The Keith Jarrett Trio

Standards, Vol. 2
Jack DeJohnette

Jack DeJohnette is known as a drummer's drummer, but he is really a musician's musician—and a fantastic brush player to boot. The music recorded on this 1983 date is simultaneously expressive, powerful, subtle, and swinging. Jack propels and inspires with his unique sound and groove. "Moon And Sand," "In Love In Vain," "Never Let Me Go," and "I Fall In Love Too Easily" provide the gold standard for broken-up time playing with brushes. And when Jack picks up his sticks, he's golden too.

Tommy Flanagan

Jazz Poet
Kenny Washington

Kenny Washington swings his butt off on this 1989 release. Check out his fat sound on "Raincheck" and "That Tired Routine Called Love": Kenny uses a back and forth sweeping motion in his left hand to fatten out his sound and the groove. His elegant ballad sensibility is obvious on "Lament" and "Glad To Be Unhappy," and you've got to hear Kenny's blistering brush groove and solo on "Mean Streets."

Jeff Hamilton

It's Hamilton Time
Jeff Hamilton

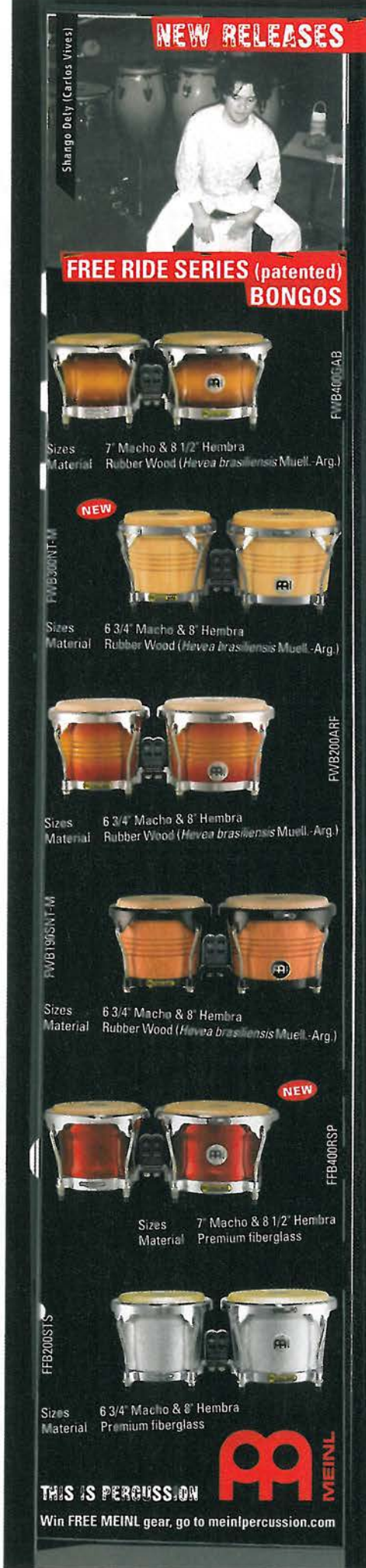
Jeff Hamilton is one of today's brush masters, and nearly every one of his recordings features virtuoso brush work on a couple of selections. My favorite is *It's Hamilton Time,* from 1994, because the ballad "Isn't It Romantic" is a brush masterpiece. Jeff really plays the arrangement. His sound is great and his repertoire of taps and sweeping moves seems endless. Jeff also plays swinging brush solos on "Like Someone In Love" and "Blues For You." To see him in action, pick up the Diana Krall *Live In Paris* DVD and the DVD of Jeff's trio at the 1998 Modern Drummer Festival.

Larry Goldings

Light Blue
Bill Stewart

Bill Stewart plays great brushes on four of the selections on this 1992 CD. "You're Looking At Me" and "Laugh, Clown, Laugh" are medium-tempo swingers. Notice the interesting way, on both of those tunes and during the ballad "All Too Soon," that Bill incorporates both acceleration and added weight to his sweeps at the point where one might play a fill. "Will You Still Be Mine?" is a brisk closer featuring clear time playing and a great brush solo.

John Riley's career has included work with such artists as John Scofield, Mike Stern, Woody Herman, and Stan Getz. He has also written two critically acclaimed books, The Art Of Bop Drumming *and* Beyond Bop Drumming, *published by Manhattan Music. His latest book,* The Jazz Drummer's Workshop, *has just been released by Modern Drummer Publications.*



Home Recording For Drummers

Part 3: Computer Software Options

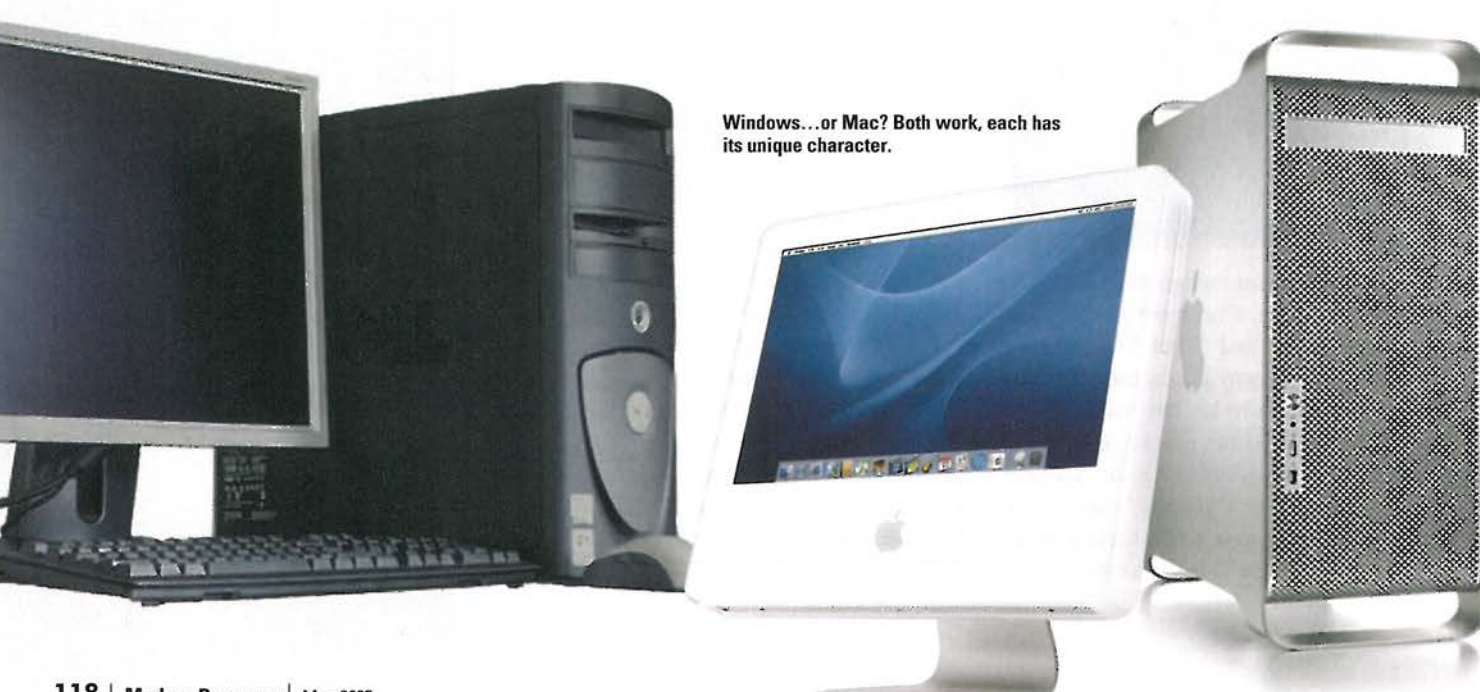
by Chris Vrenna

Welcome back to our look at recording live drums at home. In the first two parts of this series, we showed you how to set up your drums in various rooms with multiple microphones, examined different ways to patch all these microphones into preamps, compressors, and EQs, and learned how to buss together several channels for recording. And now, for the final link in our recording chain, we get into your computer and look at various DAW (digital audio workstation) software choices.

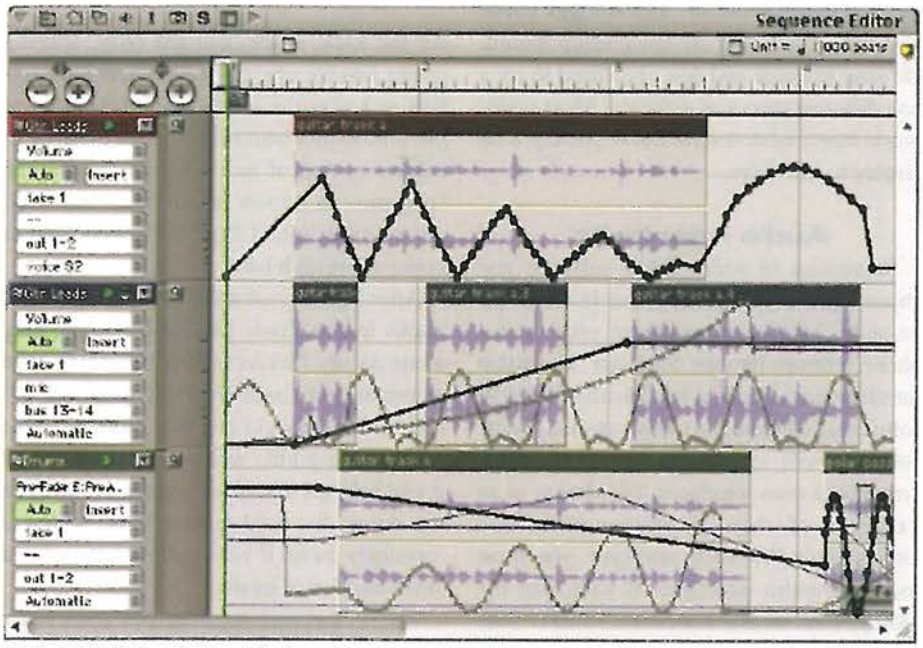
Computer Platforms And Options

For those who don't already own a computer, they come in only two varieties: Windows-based PCs and Apple Macintoshes. Either platform can make a great audio recording computer, but each has its advantages and disadvantages. For example, some software is written exclusively for Windows or for Mac. I consider myself a Mac guy, but I also own a Windows PC.

Recording multitrack audio is very taxing on any computer, regardless of the platform, so you'll need to examine a few options to help the computer perform well. The first thing to look at is the speed of the main CPU chip. The faster the better. Second is the amount of memory the computer has installed. Again, the more the better. And lastly, audio files take up a lot of space, so make sure you have a large hard drive to store all of your new recordings.



Windows...or Mac? Both work, each has its unique character.



Mark Of The Unicorn's Digital Performer is a popular recording software package.

Now, there are no standards in this area, so always look at the system requirements on any music software you purchase. It will almost always list the minimum operating system, chip speed, RAM (memory), and hard drive space needed.

Depending on the chip speed and memory options, buying a brand-new computer can be costly. Don't be afraid to look at a used machine. With new computers debuting every six months or so, the prices drop fast on models that may only be six months to a year old. If you buy a cheaper used computer, you can always buy extra memory, hard drives, and even a faster CPU chip to upgrade it as your needs grow. I still run my protocols on a four-year-old Mac G4 at 933 Mhz, even though today Apple has a brand-new dual-chip G5 machine running at 2.5 Ghz!

Recording Software

Once you've picked your computer, it's time to compare all the recording software that's available. The great news is that there are many fantastic software options for recording music for each major operating system platform—and to fit any budget. The bad news is it'll require some legwork to pick what'll be best for you.

Here are a few questions to help you choose: What operating system did you pick, Windows or Macintosh? Will you need to share sessions often with others? If so, you may want to pick a DAW package that those you work with also use, which will make sharing and transferring data easier. Third, how much third-party support does your chosen platform have? You may choose one DAW only to find out that it won't support other pieces of software that you'd also like to use.

As I have said, I use Digidesign's Pro Tools. Other recording packages include Mark Of The Unicorn's (MOTU) Digital Performer, Apple's Logic, Steinberg's Nuendo and Cubase, Cakewalk's Sonar and Home Studio, and Bias's Deck.

I often get asked why I chose Pro Tools. In my opinion (and as we all know, opinions are like something *else* everyone has) there is no right or wrong answer in choosing an operating system or DAW software. It's the music that's important, so whichever software package feels best to you and allows you to create your music faster and easier is the right choice. I've been using Pro Tools for about ten years, so it was a natural deci-

Digidesign's MBox is an example of an audio interface, a piece of hardware you'll need to get from your microphone preamps into your computer.

sion for me to equip my home setup with it. Do your research and don't be afraid to try a few different pieces of software. Most major music stores have several DAW packages on display to test-drive.

Audio Interfaces

Regardless of which DAW software you choose, you need a piece of hardware called an audio interface to get from your microphone preamps into the computer. The audio interface goes hand-in-hand with the DAW software, and there are many options. Some software will only work with a particular company's own interfaces. Digidesign is an example of this. If you want to use Digidesign's Pro Tools software, you must use their audio interfaces as well, like the MBox, 002, or HD hardware. MOTU sells several fantastic interfaces that come with their free recording software Audiodesk, but Digital Performer is a separate purchase.

Interfaces come in all shapes and sizes. They connect to the computer via either a PCI card that gets installed inside the computer, firewire (most MOTU boxes and Digidesign's 002), USB (Edirol's UA-1000 with ten inputs and ten outputs or Digidesign's MBox), or even a PCMCIA card, which is a great option if you wish to use a laptop for recording. Digigram's VXPocket 440 card even has four inputs! Other companies like M-Audio make more generic interfaces that come with software drivers to be able to work on either Windows or Mac under different recording software.

Recording And Click Tracks

Once the shopping is done, all DAWs pretty much function the same way. There's a track editing window and a virtual mixer window. You will make as many tracks as you have physical inputs for (usually two to eight, depending on which interface you buy), arm them as you would a tape deck, hit record, and start playing...finally! After you're done recording, you can use your DAW's virtual mixer to further compress, EQ, and balance levels of your multitrack recordings.

At this point I want to discuss just a couple of recording ideas. The first is a way to premix fewer of your microphones as you record. I often record my drums in several passes, starting with the kick, snare, and hi-hat. What I'll do is make tracks in Pro Tools for the kick, snare, and hat only, leaving empty hits for any toms and overhead cymbals as I play the song. You might want to put pillows or foam rubber in place of cymbals or on top of toms. That way you can "perform" in a more natural way, but without eliciting sound from the pieces you're going to overdub later.

After I get a good take, I'll then make new tracks in Pro Tools for just the toms, play along to my kick/snare/hat recording, and record the toms as an overdub. After that, I'll repeat this process for the cymbals. This technique is a little weird to get used to, but it will help get you better separation between the drums for final mixing later, which is especially useful if your audio interface has a small number of inputs.

The second tip is to use a click track while recording. Most DAWs have a built-in click, which you can turn on and off and pick the sound you'd like to hear: rim, cowbell, pop, etc. All you have to do is set the tempo of the song you are recording within the software. You can also build tempo changes within your song so that, for instance, the choruses push a bit.

I know there's an ancient and ongoing battle between drummers who believe a click track helps keep a more consistent tempo and those who believe it takes the human feel out of performances. Personally, I like using click tracks when it's appropriate. They are especially crucial if you plan to add loops or any other tempoed electronics later.

Stay tuned for the next step in our home-recording adventure. In the mean time, go make some of your very own drum recordings.

Chris Vrenna is the former drummer with Nine Inch Nails. He has also produced and remixed tracks for many top acts, has written the music to a popular video game, and leads his own critically acclaimed band, tweaker.

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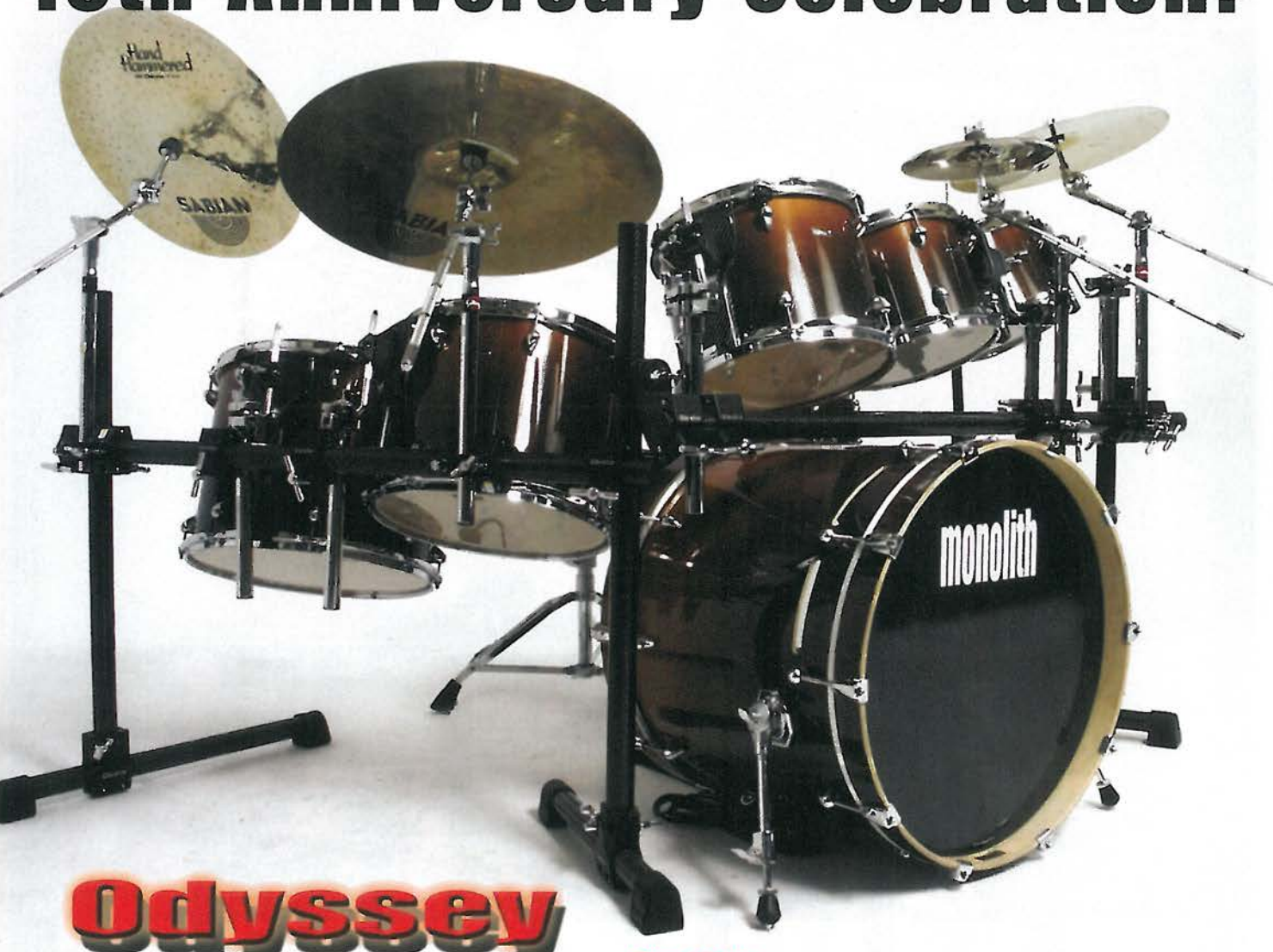

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Good Charlotte's Chris Wilson

Story by Waleed Rashidi
Photos by Steve Gillett/Angela Lubrano

Thrust Into Stardom

It helps to have friends in high places. Just ask Good Charlotte's Chris Wilson, who landed his current and amazingly impressive gig thanks in part to his pals in The Used, who informed the drummer about the important opening. "Quinn Allman, The Used's guitar player, even loaned me some money so I could fly out and meet up with the guys in Good Charlotte," Wilson recalls. "I've been with them ever since."

The spur-of-the-moment opportunity in July 2002 launched Wilson into the career of a lifetime. After all, his day gig at that time consisted of clocking in hours at a 7-Eleven convenience store in his Utah hometown. However, Wilson wasn't wasting time. He was working on his skills and dreaming of making it big.

Immediately after Wilson got the Good Charlotte gig, he soon found himself having to step up on day one—or, make that in *one day*, as he had to play his first show with the band right away. "It was surprising," he recalls. "I played my first gig with the band the day after I met them. I had to learn their show as fast as I could. And honestly, I was concerned that I might blow it. I didn't want to be fired. I thought I might not cut it, but it ended up working out very well."

The twenty-three-year-old drummer has proven his skills once again, this time on the recording of Good Charlotte's latest hit album, *The Chronicles Of Life And Death*. Though Wilson cites punk drummers like Nirvana/Foo Fighters' Dave Grohl, Yuri Ruley of MXPX, and Blink-182's Travis Barker as inspirations, the band's vast assortment of material finds Chris being stretched well beyond punk drumming norms. And that's particularly noteworthy, considering *Life And Death* is Wilson's first major-label album credit.

The album launches with the orchestral-based instrumental "Once Upon A Time." Wilson had to cut the timpani track on the song, something he definitely hadn't done before. "The whole thing was a little weird and challenging," he relates. "It was fun to be able to do the record. But overall, making it

was an interesting experience for me." The title track finds Wilson performing a walking, four-on-the-floor beat, à la Ringo Starr, whereas "I Just Wanna Live" brings forth an '80s dance feel. "We just went for something fun," Wilson notes, "just to keep it simple."

The fourteen-track collection ends with the 6/8 feel of "In This World (Murder)." "It's something a little different," he notes. "The 6/8 rhythm can be very simple and generic, but this was a little bit different. It was fun to do something like that."

Wilson nods to his bandmates as instrumental figures in helping him devise his drum parts. "They gave me really good suggestions," he says. "I was getting stuck on parts and overstressing on everything. I'm my own worst enemy and my own worst critic. Things will be good, but I'll be like, Oh my gosh, I need to be *better*. Frankly, I need to get over that mindset." Over two years since his first day in the band, Wilson's impressive performances have proved that he has what it takes

---

MD: So I take it you had never met the rest of the guys in Good Charlotte before accepting the gig?

Chris: Never. I just came out, auditioned, and started living with people that I had no idea about. But it didn't take long before we got to know each other. We all got along so well. They're just really good people to hang out with, and it's turned out to be a lot of fun.

MD: You've managed to acquire some pretty hefty road experience since joining the band. What's your road regimen like? Do you have any kind of warm-up routine?

Chris: I like to stretch a lot throughout the day. I try to get my arms warmed up right before I play, but it rarely works out as well as I want it to. When we hit the stage and play the first song, if I don't warm up, I have a lot of energy and my arms work okay. But then on the second song, I'm kind of messed up a bit. I finally start feeling better by about halfway through the third song.

MD: What got you into playing drums in the first place?

Chris: I started playing guitar when I was fourteen, and I played with bands for almost a year. But I got so sick and tired of drummers who didn't care and didn't want to practice. They'd been playing drums for years but were just so crappy. I got fed up with them because they were just such flakes and didn't want to progress. So I begged my dad to rent a drumset for me. I did a rent-to-own thing, and began working on drumming, and I really enjoyed it. Lo and behold, drums became my main thing after a little bit.

MD: What kind of drums are you playing?

Chris: I'm now playing Truth drums. They're awesome. The company has been so helpful to me and so behind me with anything I need. I just really want to help them out as much as possible. They do really amazing things and have tried to help really cool kids who deserve the opportunity. I also use Sabian cymbals, DW hardware, a Pork Pie throne, and Pro-Mark sticks.

MD: What size stick works best for you in playing this kind of music?

Chris: I'm currently using a 5B. I've gone down in size, though. I used to play a little bit bigger stick. But that can wear you down after a while.

MD: Let's talk about the new album. *Chronicles* is definitely not your typical, straightforward pop-punk record. That must have been a task for you, particularly considering it's your first major-label recording session.

Chris: Yeah, we wanted to switch things up all over the place. It may be a little too elaborate for some listeners, but it was fun to play on it.

MD: What was your tracking session like?

Chris: It went pretty fast actually. I played through a bunch of songs, trying to nail them in a couple of takes. But I have to tell you, I was so stressed the whole time. It was kind of funny, because when I'd mess up once, I'd just start thinking too hard about it. "You can't mess up. You've got to play it perfectly the whole time."

I placed a lot of pressure on myself making this record. It did get a little easier as I was working on the tracks, though. I like learning new stuff and challenging myself, and I have to say that the whole experience was *definitely* a challenge.

MD: The song "Truth" is a ballad, and it sounds like you've swapped the kit out with some other kit. Is that so, or was there something else involved?

Chris: We actually used the same kit. But we wanted a bigger, fatter sound from the drums. What we did was record the

Wilson's Kit

Drums: Truth in lime green finish
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- **B.** 8x12 tom
- **C.** 14x14 floor tom
- **D.** 16x16 floor tom
- **E.** 20x20 bass drum

Cymbals: Sabian
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2. 14" AAX Accelerator hi-hats
3. 18" AAX dark crash
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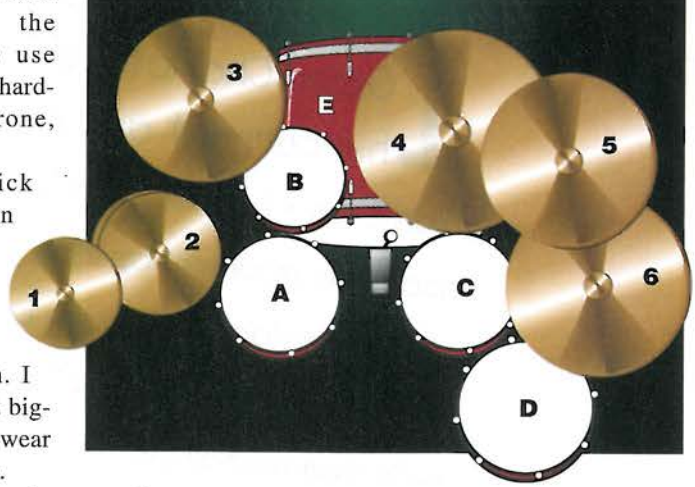
5. 19" AAX dark crash
6. 20" Evolution crash/ride

Heads: Remo coated PowerStroke 3 on snare batter (tuned tight, slight muffling), coated Emperors on tom batters, clear Ambassadors on bottoms (low tuning, slight muffling), PowerStroke 4 on kick, coated Ambassador on front (loose tuning, lots of muffling)
Sticks: Pro-Mark 5B model (hickory with wood tip)
Microphones: AKG



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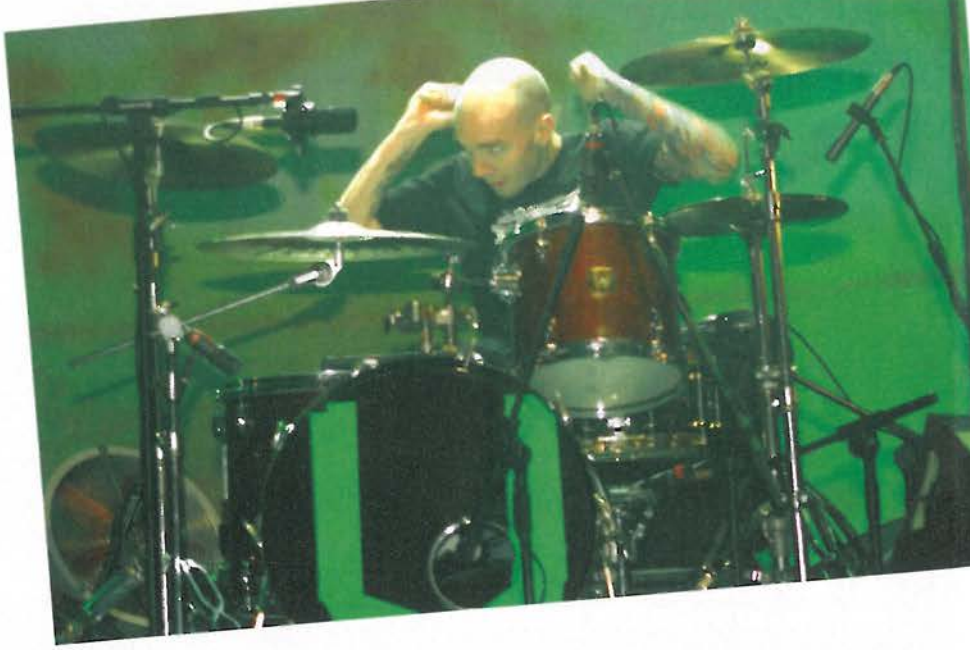

drums with the tape sped up slightly. Then when played back at normal speed, the drums sound fatter and a bit different.

MD: The arrangement and drum parts on "Truth" have this sparse, airy yet decidedly gutsy feel to it.

Chris: The drum beats were actually a lot simpler earlier on. I was just goofing around, listening to old '70s records—like George Clinton stuff—trying to get their vibe. I wanted to play it like some of those older, less-is-more type of drummers.

MD: It must be surreal to essentially come out of nowhere and be placed in the same ballgame as some of your drumming inspirations.

Chris: Yeah. I still don't see myself on the same level as them. At this point it still feels funny to say that this is my job. I love playing drums in a band.

To hear Chris Wilson with Good Charlotte, tune in to MD Radio www.moderndrummer.com

I grew up being told that this probably wouldn't happen for me and that I wouldn't be able to pull it off. There are certain people I admire so much, and just to know that I'm in the same genre as they are and able to do the same things that they're doing just feels great. That's what's kind of surreal to me.

When you're young, you don't look at the entire picture. You make up in your mind what you think this lifestyle is all about. Then, once you start living out on the road, you understand there are a lot of hardships. And though someone might think it's fun all of the time, I've learned very quickly that it's not. There are a lot of challenges involved. It's not easy. But even though it isn't exactly how I fantasized it would be, it's still pretty amazing.

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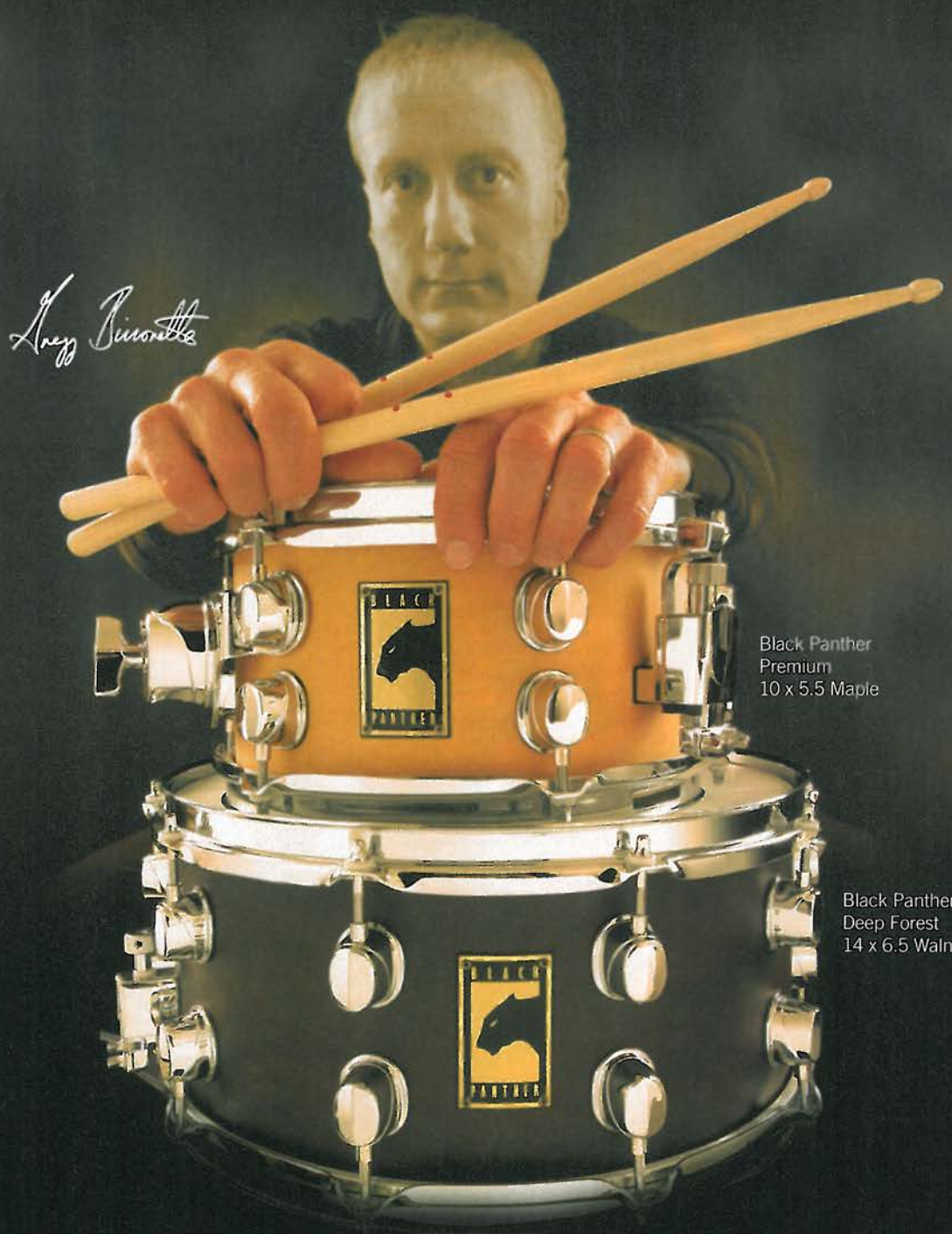

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Ray Mosca

Gentleman Of The Drums

by Ira Gitler

You hear the phrase "pro's pro" said about a certain kind of individual in different fields—sports, acting, and music, to name a few. In sports, teammates will talk about that kind of person, and it's the same in the arts. One actor will really learn to appreciate another by performing together. It's also true in music. I've always found that the interaction of the musicians, particularly in jazz, is akin to the way members of a sports team relate to one another.

Years ago I wrote a hockey instruction book for young players. I did an interview about it on radio between periods of a New York Rangers game. The announcer knew of my background as a jazz writer and asked, "What similarities do you find between jazz and hockey?" I wasn't expecting the question but answered, "You've got to think fast at uptempos."

Actually, you have to think quickly at *any* tempo, be aware of the setting, the people you're working with, their personalities, their tendencies, and be prepared to react. If you've got the talent, the experience will do the rest, especially if you cross paths with the masters of your profession and are smart enough to listen to them.

Ray Mosca became a pro's pro because he had a talent for, and a love of, the drums. "Duke Ellington wrote, A drum is like a beautiful woman," the drummer states. "You have to let it breathe and caress it. You have to love the feel of the drumhead. Play it, don't beat it. Drums are not to be choked and made unable to speak. That's the trouble with today's music. The drums today sound like dead pillows. It's like someone talking with a mouth full of cotton."

Mosca was a Leedy endorser early in his career. Inset: Ray today.

Mosca came up in a time when there was jazz royalty in abundance on every instrument. "I am blessed to have heard all the great drummers who passed it on to me," he explains. At seventy-two, Mosca reflects back on meeting the great Jonathan "Jo" Jones, the man who helped stoke the swing of the Count Basie Orchestra. "I was part of Jo's life from the time I was seventeen years old," he explains. "He and Shadow Wilson had a tremendous influence on me in how I strike a drum. If you didn't play with love or finesse, Jo would say, 'What are you mad at?'"

Jo helped Ray in many ways. "One night at the Embers," Mosca says, "Jo took his head and banged it into the snare drum. 'Be proud. That's your throne. What's your name?' I said, 'Ray Mosca,' and he answered, 'Don't ever forget it.' He taught me how to sit and how to make my feet work better."

One night in the early 1950s, Jones took Mosca and Oliver Jackson up to Minton's on 118th Street. It was a time when heroin use was prevalent. When they left the club there were several obvious junkies hanging around outside. "See those guys," said Jones, who then immediately lectured the young drummers on what not to do. When Jones was estranged from his wife for three months in 1969, Ray had him move in with him. He remained tight with his mentor. And when Jo was ill in the '80s, Mosca, along with Major Holley, Jamil Nasser, and Duke Ellington's nephew Michael James, "babysat him until the time he passed."

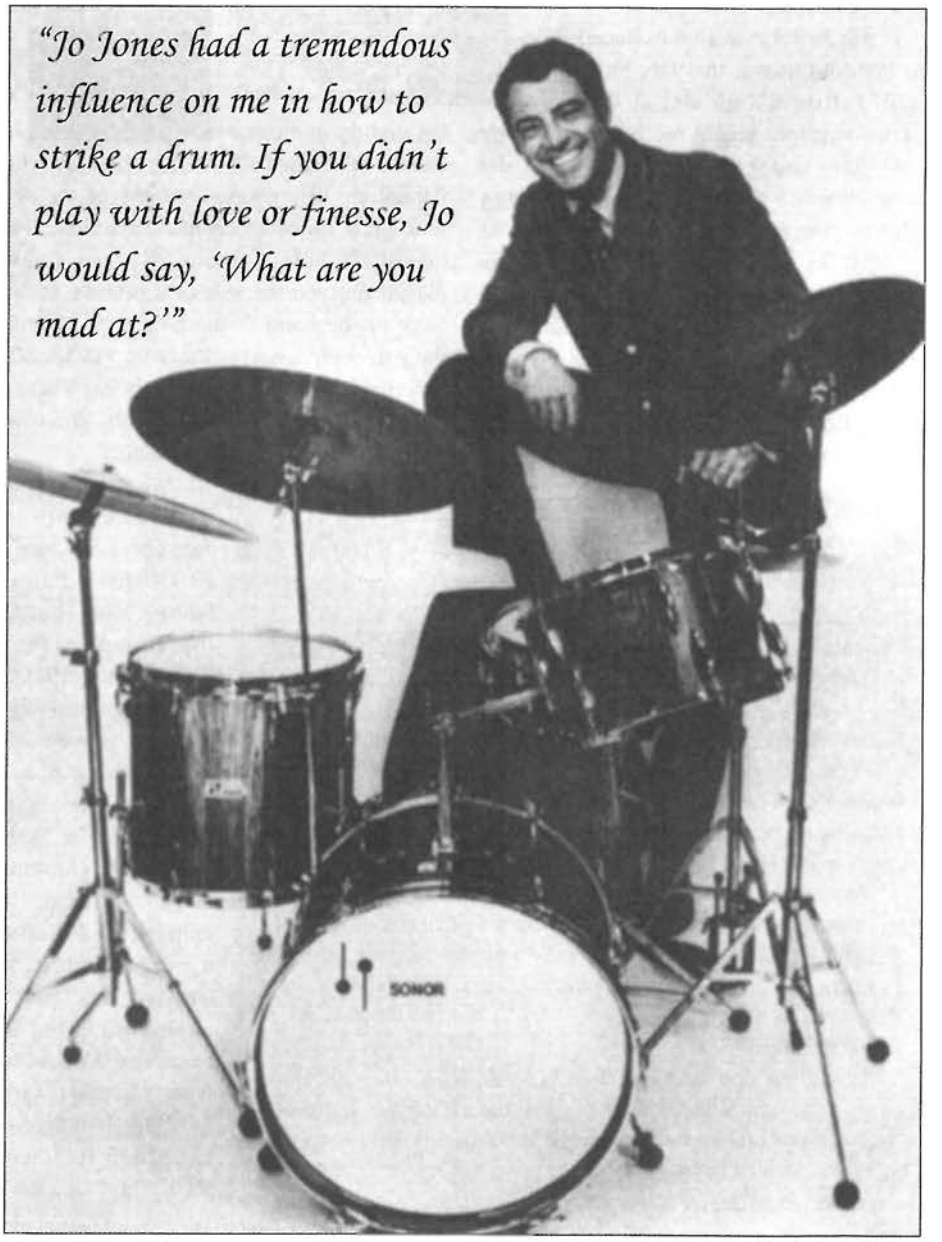
The love of the drums Ray talks about started very early in his life. Born in the Bronx, he grew up in Corona, Queens playing, from age eight, with two of his uncles who had been, respectively, with Paul Whiteman and Joe Venuti. At fourteen Ray was playing for parties in the Catskill Mountains of New York State. He was also part of an interracial big band of teenagers in Corona. Dizzy Gillespie lived nearby and would invite the kids to come to his basement and listen to his big band rehearse.

Mosca studied with big band drummer Gordon Heiderrich at Henry Adler's famed Midtown studio. Ray was also tutored by the renowned teacher Billy Gladstone, whom he describes as able "to play a roll on a piece of toilet paper without tearing it. 'Touch!' He would say, 'Touch, touch.' Touch enabled me to play with all the great pianists."

Mosca has done it all during his long career, from orchestras on down. But it's when you review the list of pianists he has accompanied that the breadth and quality comes out. In fact, it's staggering: Monty Alexander, John Bunch, Cy Coleman, Dorothy Donegan, Tommy Flanagan, Erroll Garner, Hampton Hawes, Earl Hines, Hank Jones, Alex Kallao, Mike Longo, Dave McKenna, Marty Napoleon, Phineas Newborn, Oscar Peterson, Hazel Scott, George Shearing, Billy Taylor, Lennie Tristano, George Wallington, Mary Lou Williams, and Teddy Wilson. Most were in a trio setting; Bunch and Jones were with Benny Goodman.

Ray learned how to play all kinds of styles and with all types of stylists. "With Garner you had to use crisp, shorter strokes and pay attention to his left hand," he says. "Tristano wanted you to play like a metronome. Right after that I got the gig with Zoot Sims. It was like taking the noose off my neck."

"Jo Jones had a tremendous influence on me in how to strike a drum. If you didn't play with love or finesse, Jo would say, 'What are you mad at?'"



Ray in a Sonor ad in the early '70s

Ray Mosca

As much as Mosca lauds the drummers who have helped him—Gene Krupa, with whom he spent hours talking, practicing, and playing duets, and Shelly Manne, who "showed me how to tune the drums and hipped me to click tracks"—Ray also pays tribute to the many bassists with whom he shared bandstands.

"One of the great learning experiences I've had," he says, "is playing with all the great bass players: Teddy Kotick, Nobby Totah, Aaron Bell, Major Holley, Joe Benjamin, Paul Chambers, Doug Watkins, Henry Grimes, Bob Cranshaw, Gene Ramey, Arvell Shaw, Sam Jones, Victor Gaskin, Slam Stewart, George Mraz, Jon Burr, George Duvivier, Richard Davis, Milt Hinton, Jimmy Bond, and Oscar Pettiford."

It was Jo Jones who introduced Ray to Pettiford. Later, in 1956, he played with Pettiford's quintet at the Five Spot. "Pettiford taught me how to play the bass drum under the bass to embellish the beat between the bass and drum," says Mosca. "He was the best ever. With Oscar or Duvivier in the rhythm section, it was like driving a Ferrari—easy and fast. Everything worked easy. Your cymbal beat would open up and play by itself."

Latin music is not foreign to Mosca. When he was eighteen, studying at the Manhattan School of Music, he was playing nightly in the big band of Humberto Morales at the Palladium. "Humberto was one of the all-time great timbale players," says Ray. "He taught me how to swing in clave. I just played time on the side of a timbale at the back of the band. What helped to get me the job with George Shearing [1958–60] was that I could also play timbales. There I had the pleasure of playing with Armando Peraza, the great conga drummer."

Mosca appears with Shearing in *Jazz On A Summer's Day*, the famous feature film shot at the Newport Jazz Festival in 1959. On Broadway in 1975, Ray was on stage in a five-piece blues band for the show *Me And Bessie*, starring Linda Hopkins as Bessie Smith. He enjoyed it, but after a year he quit. "I wanted to 'play' again." This led to twenty-two weeks in New Orleans with Dorothy Donegan's trio; then to Japan with Earl "Fatha" Hines, with whom Mosca ended up touring. "Some nights the arthritis in his hands would bother him. On other nights he was like Monk, so inventive."

Other icons of earlier eras that Mosca played with are Bobby Hackett ("I met Louis Armstrong through Bobby"), Ben Webster and Roy Eldridge at the Metropole, and singers such as Billie Holiday, Lena Horne, Carmen McRae, Joe Williams, and Tony Bennett.

Another inspiration was Buddy Rich. Mosca saw a side of him that many weren't privy to. "There was only one Buddy Rich," he says. "He was the best ever as a drummer and as a person. I got along great with him in spite of all the negative things you hear.

"I hung out with Buddy a lot in the '60s. We used to drive sports cars together. He had a 300SL Mercedes-Benz. After work at 4:00 A.M., we would go out of New York and drive at 100 mph. He loved speed and excellence. He played like that and dressed like that. No one knew the snare drum like Buddy. Plus he had a dancer's feet. Put them together and you had 'genius.'"

After lamenting that Rich and Jo Jones were gone with the statement "They were my heart," Ray turned upbeat. "The one who is still swinging and playing better than ever is Roy Haynes. I love him. He is finally getting the acclaim he deserves. Roy has been playing great for over fifty years. Amazing. He's able to fit and play with all these young people out here," that last comment a reference to Haynes' quartet.

Mosca Music

10 Must-Have Recordings

Artist	Album
Dorothy Donegan	The Incredible Dorothy Donegan Trio With Special Guest Dizzy Gillespie
Dorothy Donegan	Live At The 1992 Floating Jazz Festival With Clark Terry
Benny Goodman Sextet	Concerts/Yale Archives
Earl Hines	Swingin' Away
Mike Longo	I Miss You John
Mike Longo	"Live": The Detroit International Jazz Festival
Dave McKenna Quartet	Dave McKenna Quartet Featuring Zoot Sims
Flip Phillips	At The Helm/Live At The 1993 Floating Jazz Festival
Gray Sargent Trio	Shade Of Gray
Billy Taylor Trio	Warming Up

Staying Loose, Yet Firm

Mosca On Fitness

"I would like to pass on some thoughts about the physical aspects of playing drums," says Ray Mosca. "All the great drummers I've known were great athletes. I was a varsity, four-letter man at Forest Hills High School and continued to play tennis for forty years, twenty with Papa Jo. He was a great tennis player. Gene Krupa played softball all his life and was coach of his Catholic church's team. Buddy Rich was a black belt in Karate. And Gus Johnson played golf.

"You must maintain your agility and muscles. Yoga is great. Stay loose yet firm. When the drums become an extension of the body, the body is working and agile and the drums are working correctly. Exercise will give you confidence and keep your mind straight. When you're not dancing, you're playing flat-footed. Be sure to practice and exercise.

"Finally, the most important thing is sleep. When you're traveling on the road, you have to learn how to rest on planes, trains, and busses. As a professional, you have to be able to perform on the same day you're traveling."

When Mosca was fourteen he heard Henry Adler's star pupil Freddie Gruber, five years Ray's senior. "Henry took us into the practice room and Freddie played on a pad for us. He had some tremendously fast hands."

It took many years before Mosca caught up with Gruber, but they've become very close in the past ten years. "He is very knowledgeable about life and the drums," Ray says. "That's what makes him one of the great drum teachers."

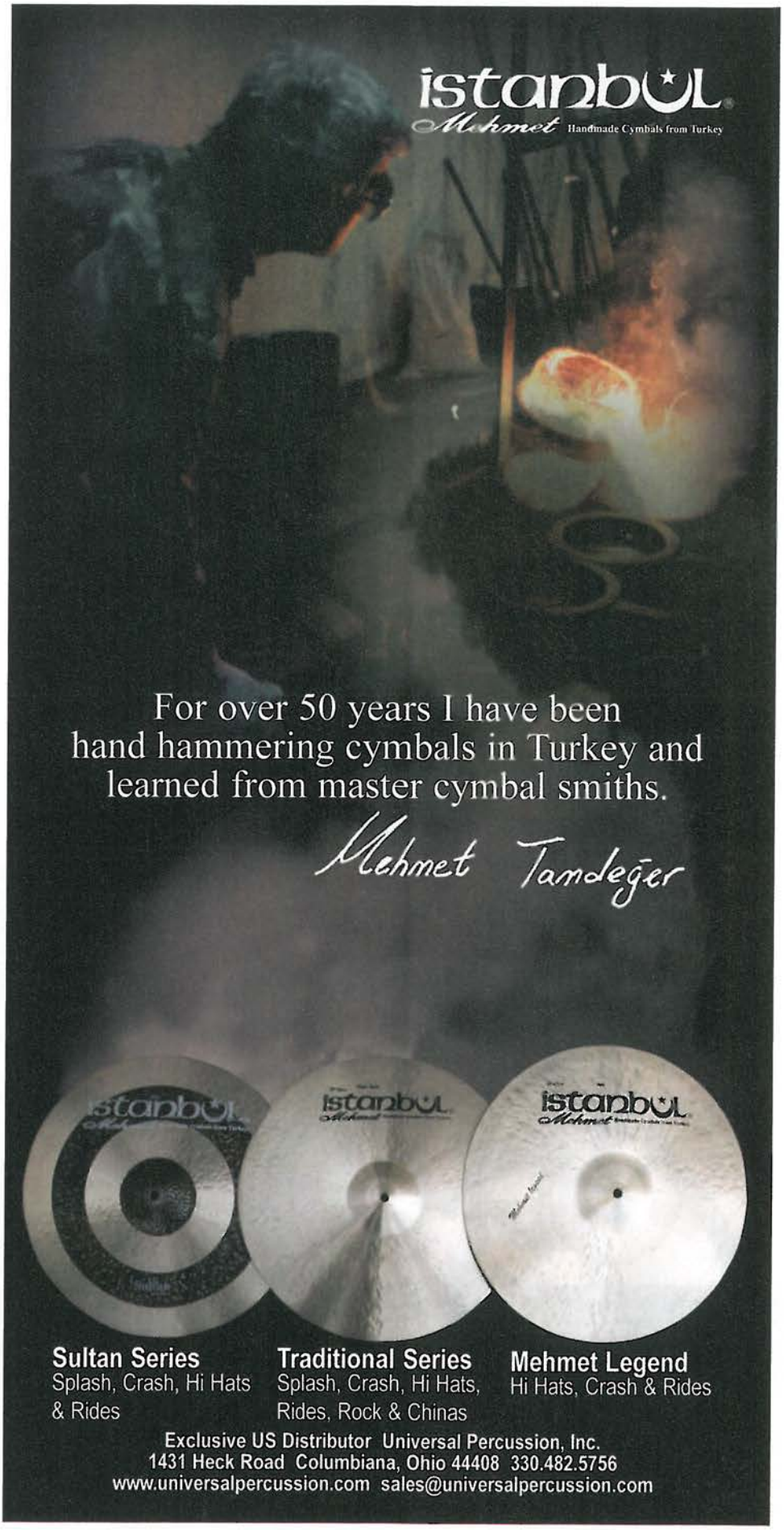
At Freddie's seventy-sixth birthday dinner in New York last May, Mosca, Roy Haynes, Jim Keltner, and I were present with many other friends. Keltner was the one who instigated the idea of an article about Ray in *Modern Drummer*. The studio veteran recently told me, "There's so much that a player like Ray brings to the table, coming from the influence of real jazz. Younger people from my generation and on forward should be aware of him. Today everything is power drumming, not subtlety. More younger people should learn about the roots."

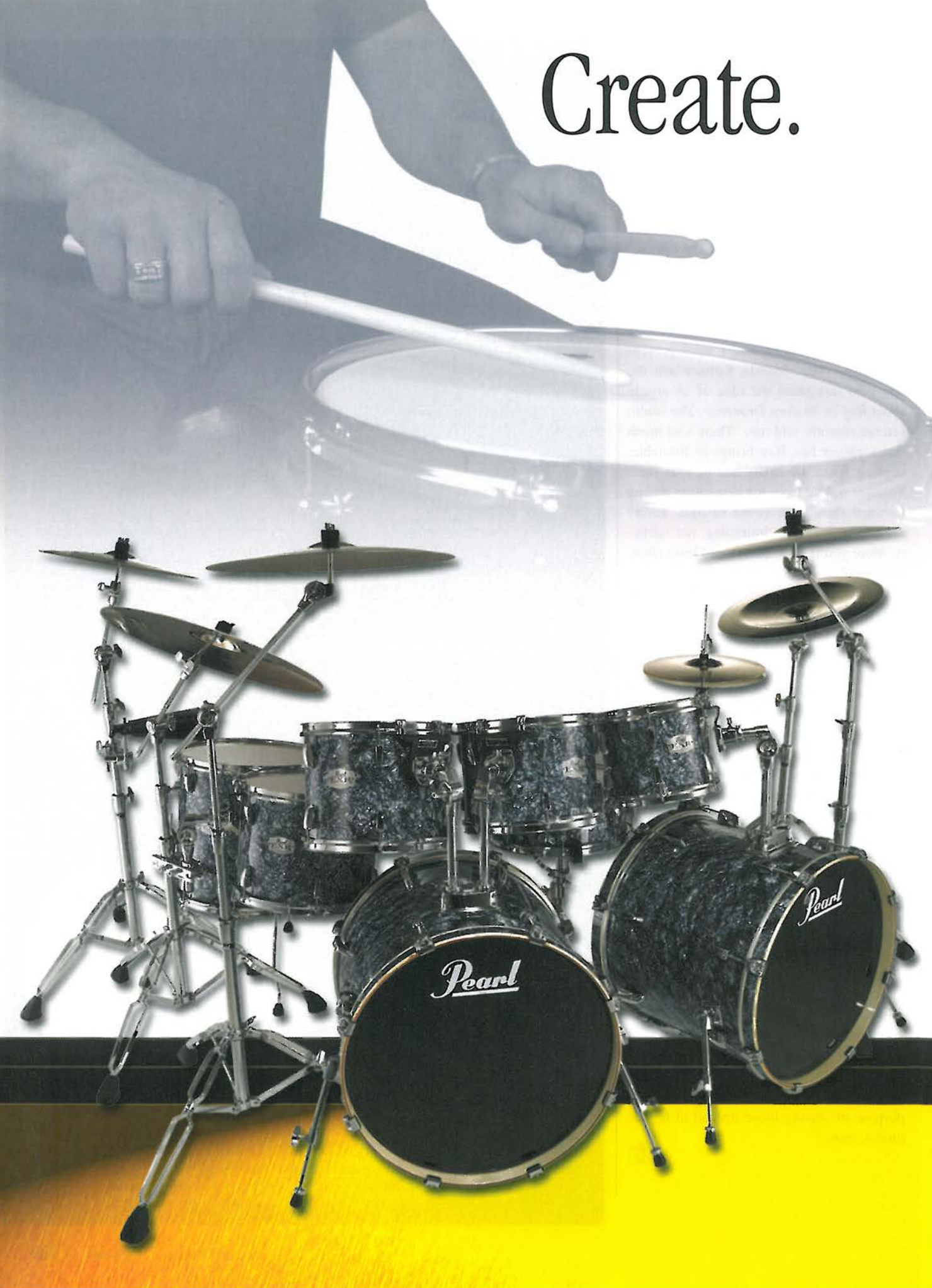
Haynes recalls first hearing Ray in the '50s. "He was in the pocket and always sounded good and fresh—and he still does," says Roy. "You always heard about him from other musicians."

It remains for Gruber to sum up Mosca in a poetic way: "My friend Ray Mosca, an American drummer playing American music, professional, at the highest level. Schlepping those 'trashcans' without the benefit of a drum tech, whether it was on the open road, or up five flights of a tenement; a man who's only concerned with the thought, 'Can the bass player play?' and with no concern at all, whatsoever, for what seems to be currently prevailing—higher, louder, more—and 'Do I look good in the picture of the new ad.'

"In short, Ray Mosca spells out what the word 'professional' implies; one of the best of many drummers who represent perfect time—the imperfect that becomes perfect on the basis of feeling.

"At seventy-two his sense of dedication hasn't diminished one iota, and a day doesn't go by when he doesn't practice for the purpose of staying loose instead of higher, louder, more!"

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MMM, MMM Good
Mapex M-Birch Series

As their name implies, Mapex's M-Birch drums are made with birch shells, which are said to provide "amazing attack and clarity." The drums also feature an exterior maple veneer finished in transparent cherry red, emerald green, honey amber, purple, or sapphire, with a transparent high-gloss lacquer finish that reveals the grain of the maple. M-Birch sets will be offered in one six-piece ($1,499.99) and five five-piece ($1,199.99) configurations that include double-braced Mapex 500-Series Performing Artist Hardware and a throne.

Throughout 2005, consumers purchasing five-piece Studio, Fusion, Fusionease, or Jazz kits will receive a free matching 8" tom. Purchasers of a five-piece Standard kit will receive a free 10" tom. The free add-on toms will be equipped with a TH684 tom arm and an AC901 multiclamp.
(615) 793-2050, www.mapexdrums.com.

Mapex M-Birch kit in Transparent Honey Amber

Quick On The Draw
Meinl Byzance Fast Hi-Hats

Meinl cymbals and drum star Thomas Lang have gotten together to create new Byzance Fast hi-hats. These hi-hats have been specially developed for Thomas's complex and sophisticated drum style.

The top and bottom cymbals come in two different finishes, combining the dark sound of the bottom with the brilliance of the top cymbal. Holes drilled near the edges of both cymbals enable the air between them to escape. This is said to generate an extremely fast chick with a short sustain, while still allowing the cymbals to produce a full hi-hat sound, especially when played with the foot. The 13" pair is priced at $450; the 14" hats list for $525.
(615) 227-5090, www.meinlcymbals.com.

Take A Stand Or Take A Seat

DW 9702 Twin Cymbal Multi Stand And New Thrones

DW's new 9702 Twin Cymbal Multi Stand is designed for versatility. It features oversized 1¼" tubing, dual-vise integrated memory locks, oversized tube joints, and a hardy Mega-Base tripod for the increased stability needed for multiple cymbal setups. The Multi Stand retails for $265.

Besides holding two cymbals, the 9702 can be configured in almost limitless ways when paired with DW SmartPack accessories such as an additional 912 Cymbal Arm ($36) or 2034 Cymbal Tilter Clamp ($24). The new 2030 Counterweight can also be added for balance and to extend cymbal arm reach.

New to DW's 9000 series of drum thrones are two pneumatically adjustable Air Lift models. Both feature seats with DW's dual-foam construction for firm support. The 9100AL ($215) offers a 14" round throne top. The 9120AL ($248) Tractor Seat design features an adjustable backrest (sold separately). Both models are constructed using heavy-gauge tubing, solid ear castings, and oversized rubber feet. In addition, the upward-folding base now includes four legs to provide increased stability.

(805) 485-6999, www.dwdrums.com.

From The Pacific Northwest

Oregon Drum Steambent Shell Drums And New Drum Lug

Oregon Drums now offers Steambent shells within its 2005 Myrtlewood series, in addition to the existing Stave and Solid shell lines. Myrtlewood drums range from 3x12 to 7x14. Each drum comes with a padded hardshell case.

The arrival of these new drums also marks the introduction of Oregon's new lug, which has a body designed in-house, and all components sourced from, and plated by, other US companies. Color combinations were selected to complement existing hardware components and further distinguish the Myrtlewood line from the other Oregon models.

The new lug features Oregon's VTHC system, which is said to assure smooth tension-rod alignment from top to bottom hoop regardless of minor variances in shell diameter and/or hoop tolerances. This allows for single-point and tube lug designs that maintain proper tension rod alignment on horizontal and vertical planes.

(541) 269-0383, www.oregondrum.com.

Nifty Gizmos With A Purpose

Vater Jingle Ring And Slick Nut

Vater's Jingle Ring was designed in collaboration with artist Jose Medeles (The Breeders/independent) to give drummers a new and different kind of accessory. The Ring sits atop the drumhead on a snare drum or tom, producing a unique drum/tambourine sound when the drum is struck. The Ring can easily be transported on the same drumhead inside the drum's case. Four sizes are available: 12" ($16.95), 13" ($17.95), 14" ($18.95), and 16" ($19.95).

Vater has also recently added the Slick Nut cymbal fastener to its accessory line. Unlike a traditional wing nut, the Slick Nut doesn't need to be threaded on or off the stand, and won't loosen or fall off during play. Simply hold in the fastening button, put the Slick Nut on the cymbal stand to the desired tightness, and release the button. The Slick Nut can also be used as a theft deterrent by tightening a hex set screw on the side of the body. The Slick Nut comes in 8 mm—the most common thread size for cymbal stands—with a top cymbal felt already attached. A hex key and a replacement felt are included. List price is $12.99.

(781) 767-1877, www.vater.com.

Pieces Of Eight, Indeed!

Octaboom Drums

Octaboom drums are made from specialty hardwoods such as cherry, padauk, mahogany, birch, walnut, wormy maple, and purpleheart. In place of conventional round shells, Octaboom drums have eight-sided shell designs (hence their name). Resonance is said to be enhanced because mounting hardware never contacts the shell.

In 1996, drummer/designer Tom Clements became inspired with the eight-sided concept as a way to make drums that look and sound great, but are also affordable, easy to set up, and inexpensive to maintain. By using solid hardwood rather than laminated plies for shell construction, and by isolating the shells from the mounting hardware, Clements achieved what he terms "the tonal purity and full sound" of Octaboom drums. Off-the-shelf hardware is used for easy availability; tension rods and tuning keys can be purchased at any hardware store.

(303) 651-0414, www.octaboom.com.

The Power Of Three

Earthworks DrumKit Microphone System

Earthworks claims that their DrumKit Microphone System will provide a better drumkit sound with three microphones than that produced by other quality systems using seven or more mic's. Proprietary Earthworks technology provides microphones that will capture full percussive attacks and minute details that other microphones mask. To prove the point, the DrumKit System brochure (orderable online) has a demo CD inside so you can hear the comparisons.

The DrumKit System utilizes new 25-kHz microphones designed specifically for percussion, and comes in two versions. The DK25/R is for recording, with two TC25 omnis for overheads and an SR25 cardioid for the kick drum. The DK25/L live performance model comes with two SR25 cardioids for overheads and an SR25 for the kick drum. The mic's come in an attractive solid wood carrying case with a velvet lining. List price is $2,100.

(603) 654-6427, www.earthwks.com.

Percussion For The Great Outdoors

Black Swamp Resin Fiber Tambourine And David Gross Field Custom Mallets

Black Swamp Percussion's Resin Fiber tambourine is designed to withstand extreme climate conditions without sacrificing sound quality. It features a dense, custom-made resin fiber shell, a Remo Renaissance head, and hand-hammered jingles. Because all of the components are impervious to weather, this tambourine is suitable for outdoor concerts, drum corps, and marching bands. Models are available with German silver jingles ($121) and chromium/bronze combination jingles ($117). Each model is available in black, red, blue, and green.

David Gross Field Custom mallets are specifically designed for marching and corps ensembles. They are made with a heavy maple shaft for projection in outdoor environments. The felts on the mallets are hand sewn, and are made of a soft but durable synthetic material said to be impervious to climate conditions. Mallets are available in four models: FC1 Legato ($52), FC2 General ($49), FC3 Medium Hard Staccato ($49), and FC4 Hard Staccato ($49).

(616) 879-0066, www.blackswamp.com.

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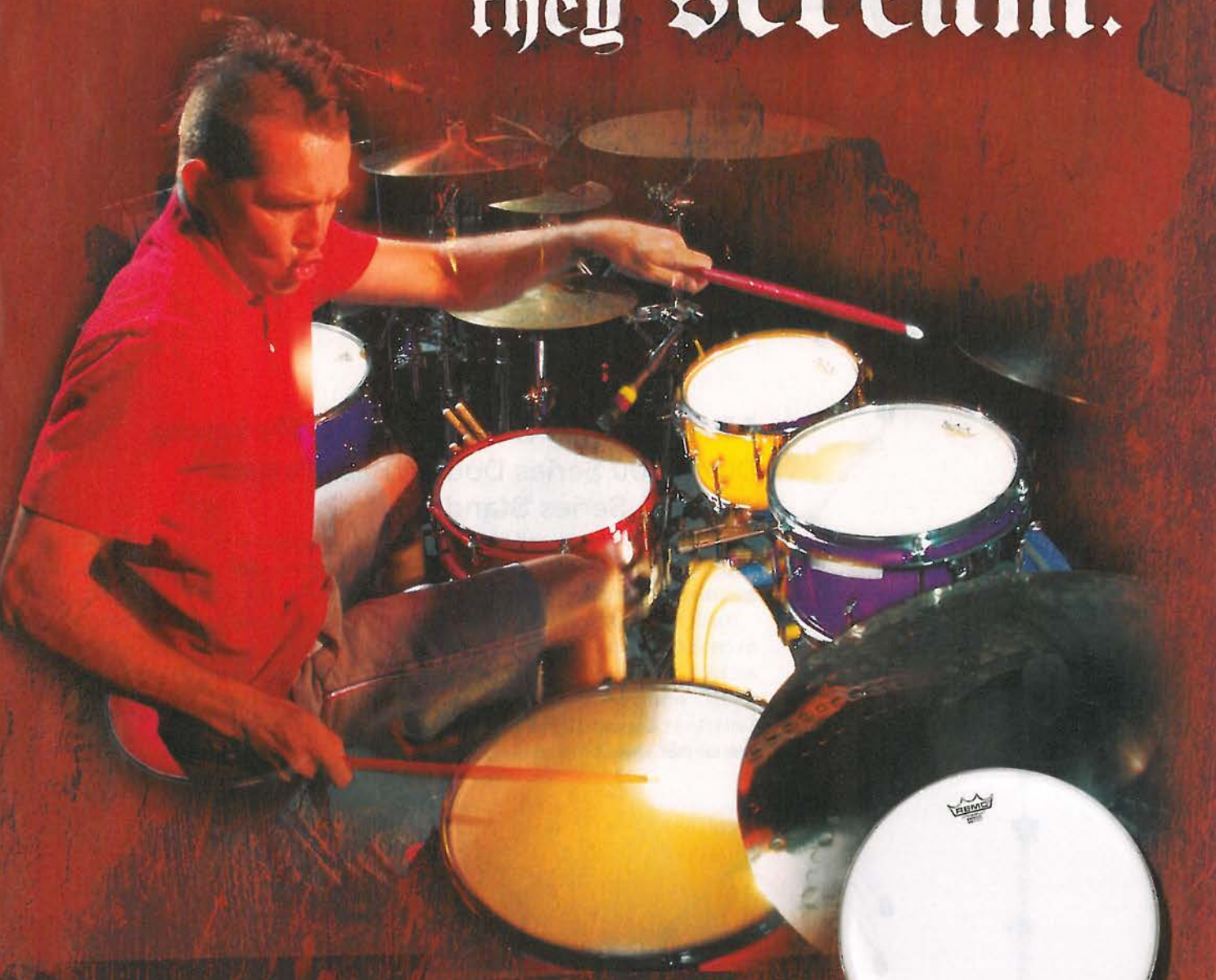

If Smooth White™ drumheads are potent enough for artists Adrian Young, Travis Barker, Tre Cool, WUV and drum manufacturers like Orange County Drum & Percussion, Pearl Drums and Premier Drums, imagine what they can do for your sound. They come in Ambassador® and Emperor® weights and are made of high-quality Dupont® Melinex®. All of which means incredibly warm sounds that are durable enough to go the distance.

remo.com

Bird Of Play

Gretsch Blackhawk EX Series

Gretsch's Blackhawk EX is an entry-level kit designed with power and good looks in mind. Features include a Mini GTS suspension system, 100% mahogany shells with 30° bearing edges, a matching wood snare drum, and 18"-deep bass drums with matching inlaid wood hoops. Kits are available in Blue Diamond, Ebony Diamond, and White Diamond retro-styled covered Nitron finishes and in two power configurations.

(860) 509-8888, www.gretschdrums.com.

Gretsch Blackhawk EX kit in White Diamond retro-styled Nitron finish

Hardware At Soft Prices

Dixon 800 Series Double Bass Pedals And 700 Series Stands

Dixon hardware is designed to offer quality performance at affordable prices. The 811DB double bass pedal features a dual-surface beater, a single-chain sprocket/cam drive system, easy-access bass drum hoop clamp adjustment, and stabilizer platforms with built-in spurs. List price is $262.50.

Dixon's lightweight, double-braced 707 hi-hat stand ($63.75) features a direct-pull system with a double chain. The 709 double-braced boom stand ($58.75) features an 8-mm extended-geared tilter and hideaway boom arms. Both stands feature hinged height adjustment and cast tripod collars with captive threaded bolt inserts. All Dixon hardware comes with a one-year warranty, supported by Kaman Music Corporation's Percussion Parts Center.

(860) 509-8888, www.dixonhardware.com.

PLAYS WELL WITH OTHERS.

INTRODUCING THE NEW A CUSTOM MEDIUM CRASHES

The A Custom range has set a new standard in contemporary music since being developed with drumming virtuoso, Vinnie Colaiuta. Over the years, drummers like **Shawn Pelton** have relied on the A Custom versatility to keep up with their musical demands. Now seven new **Medium Crashes** deliver the louder, more pronounced crash alternative you've been searching for. These brilliant finish cymbals are brighter with a medium decay, but still very musical and modern. And like Shawn, extremely versatile in any playing situation - live or in the studio. Available in sizes 14" through 20". Mix them into your set-up and see how well they play together.

A CUSTOM Medium Crash 14 15 16 17 18 19 20

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The Reference Shelf

Musical Drumming In Different Styles DVD

by Gregg Bissonette **(Hudson Music)**

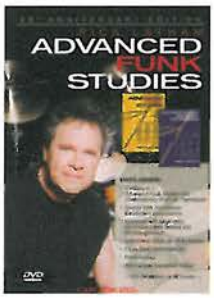
On this four-hour, two-disc DVD, Gregg Bissonette focuses on his highly successful approach to the creation of musically supportive drum parts for virtually any studio or live drumming situation. Drawing on his extensive experience with a wide range of artists, Gregg clearly defines what the term "playing for the music" means.

The set includes eight tracks from Gregg's two solo albums. Gregg discusses his interpretation of each, along with the specific drum grooves and fills he chooses. He also provides exercises and suggestions to help players develop the techniques necessary to play different styles with confidence and musicality. List price is $49.95.

(888) 796-2992, www.hudsonmusic.com.

Advanced Funk Studies (Anniversary DVD)

by Rick Latham **(Carl Fischer)**



This DVD celebrates the 25th Anniversary of Rick Latham's seminal *Advanced Funk Studies* book. It contains the full-length original videos of *Advanced Funk Studies* and *Contemporary Drumset Techniques*, which are based on Rick's best selling instructional publications. Bonus features include interviews with Louie Bellson and Ed Shaughnessy, an in-depth look at Rick's setup, and all-new playing sequences that demonstrate Rick's rudimental and linear concepts. List price is $34.95.

(212) 777-0900, www.carlfischer.com.

The Quick Guide To Djembe Drumming DVD

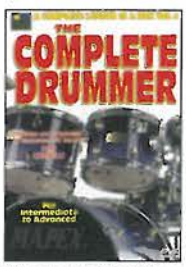
by Steve Leicach **(Carl Fischer)**

This DVD offers a concise yet comprehensive look at the techniques necessary to play the West African djembe. Topics covered include essential drum tones (bass, touch, and slap), a diverse assortment of African rhythms, improvisation, soloing, and cultural context. Rhythms explained include traditional econcon, kakilambe, and lendjien. List price is $19.95.

(212) 777-0900, www.carlfischer.com.

The Complete Drummer (A Complete Lesson In A Box Vol. 2) DVD

by Toni Cannelli **(Fifth Avenue Films)**

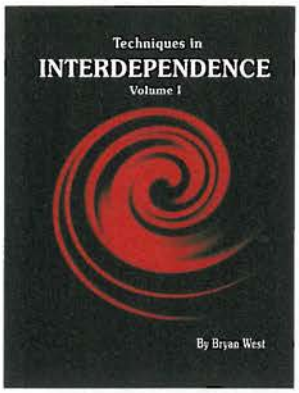


Following on his *Play Drums Now!* DVD and CD for the beginner to intermediate drummer, renowned UK drum teacher Toni Cannelli offers an eighty-minute step-by-step DVD lesson aimed at the intermediate to advanced player. The package covers rudiments on one surface and around the kit, motion technique, bass drum technique, 144 new beats, coordination, creating a drum part, goal setting, and snare-drum maintenance. The DVD also has the play-along music in mp3 format and the drum charts in PDF format. The DVD is available in NTSC all regions and is therefore playable in all territories worldwide.

fifthavenuefilms@supanet.com, www.fifthavenuefilms.com.

Techniques In Interdependence, Volume 1

by Bryan West **(Trafford Publishing)**



This is the first in a series of books aimed at helping drummers develop a high level of skill with all four of their limbs. It's intended to help drummers identify and correct problems with hand and foot coordination while dramatically improving their timing, coordination, and concentration skills. The book contains every combination of 8th notes, 8th-note triplets, and 16th notes, beginning with one-limb independence exercises and then progressing to two and three-limb exercises. Volume 2 will have all of the four-limb combinations. *Techniques In Interdependence* is for beginning through advanced drummers who play any style of music. List price is $24.95.

(866) 638-6884, www.trafford.com.

The Quick Guide To Playing Doumbek DVD

by Todd Roach **(Carl Fischer)**

This DVD offers a preliminary approach to playing the doumbek, the most popular drum in the Middle East. The step-by-step lessons quickly and effectively guide the student to basic proficiency on the instrument. The viewer will learn the correct positioning of the drum, proper tone, and rhythmic combinations that are directly integrated into playing traditional Middle Eastern music. List price is $19.95.

(212) 777-0900, www.carlfischer.com.

Rhythm & Light

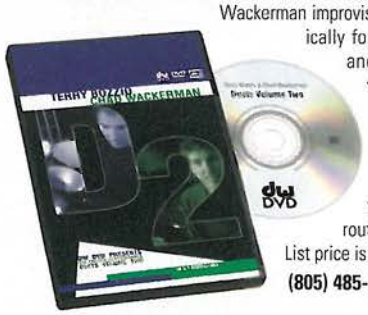
by Carrie Nuttall **(Rounder Books)**

This coffee table–size collection of black & white photos is a rare glimpse into the world of Rush drummer Neil Peart. The shots were taken by Neil's wife, photographer Carrie Nuttall, in 2001, during the creation and recording of Rush's *Vapor Trails* album. It's the first time that Neil has allowed anyone to document the day-to-day process of his creative life. Introductions by Ms. Nutthall and by Neil himself add insight to the work, and comments by Neil's teacher, Freddie Gruber, contribute to the character of many of the photos. List price is $40.

(800) 768-6337, www.rounder.com.

D2: The Return Of Bozzio And Wackerman's Duets (DVD)

(DW DVD)



This full-length performance DVD features drumming legends Terry Bozzio and Chad Wackerman improvising original music composed specifically for drumset. Multiple camera angles and digital 5.1 surround sound put viewers right in the middle of the percussive onslaught.

Bozzio and Wackerman explain their unique approach to the instrument and give an analysis of their performance, their practice routines, and their musical expression. List price is $39.95.

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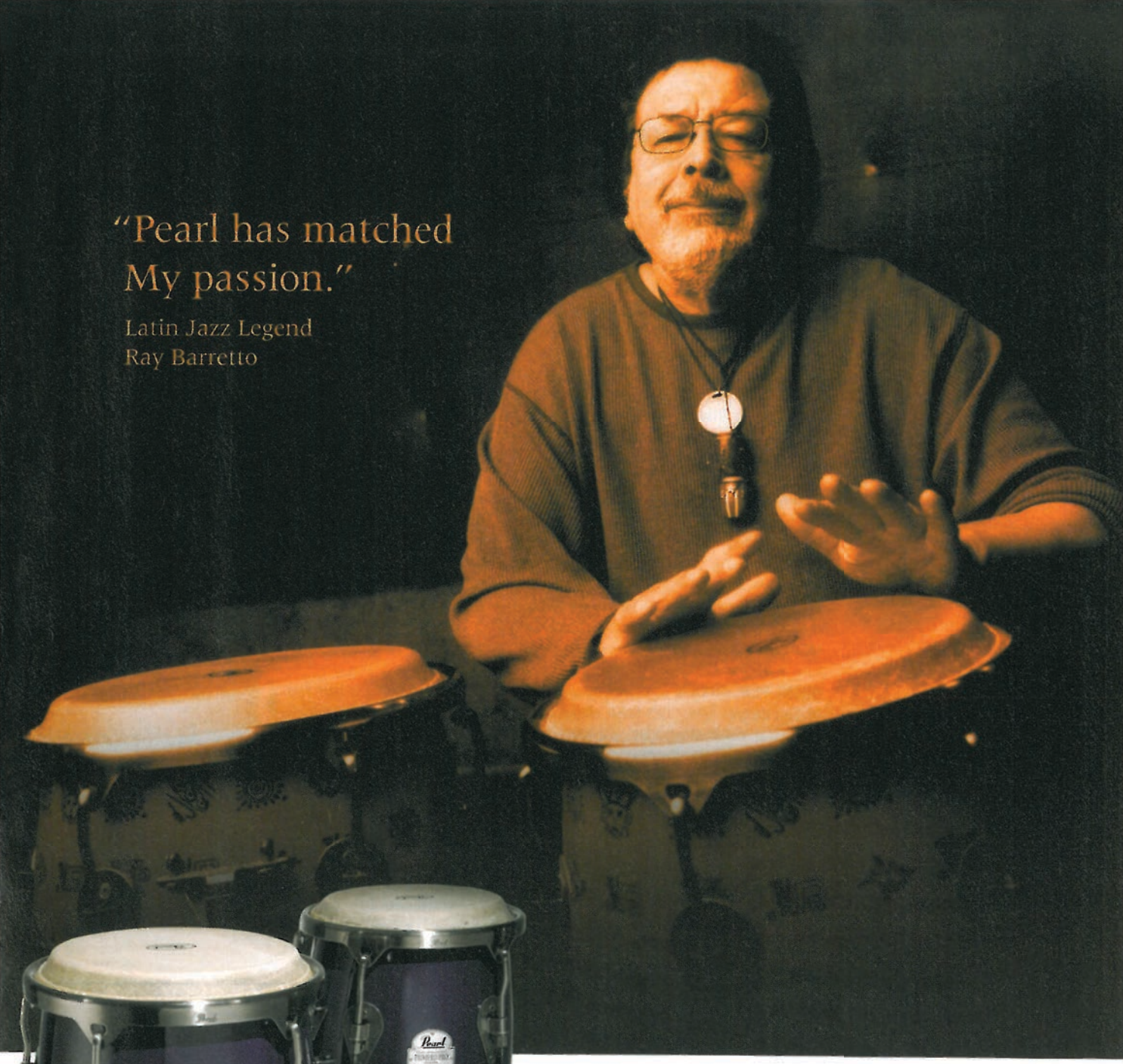

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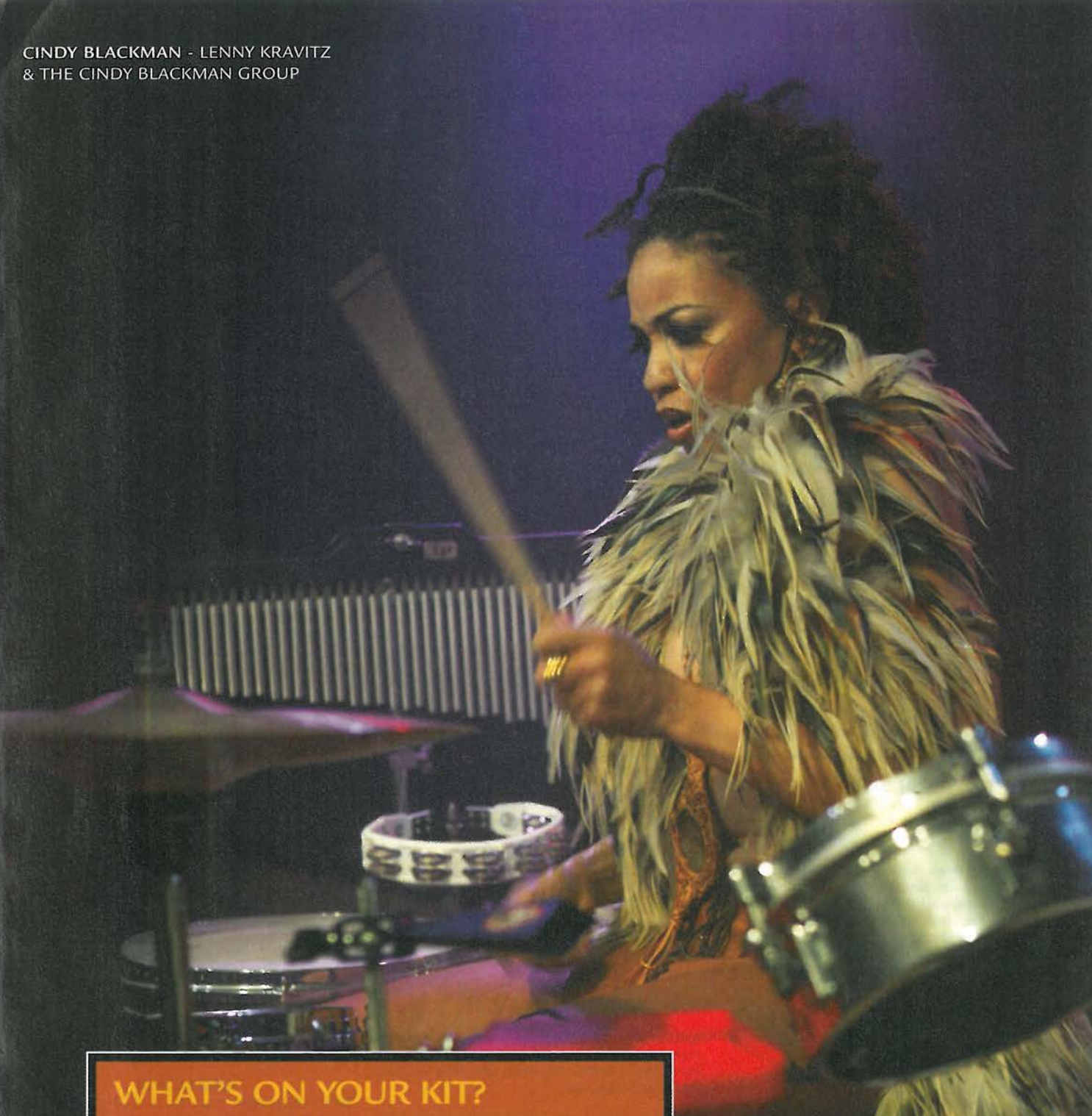

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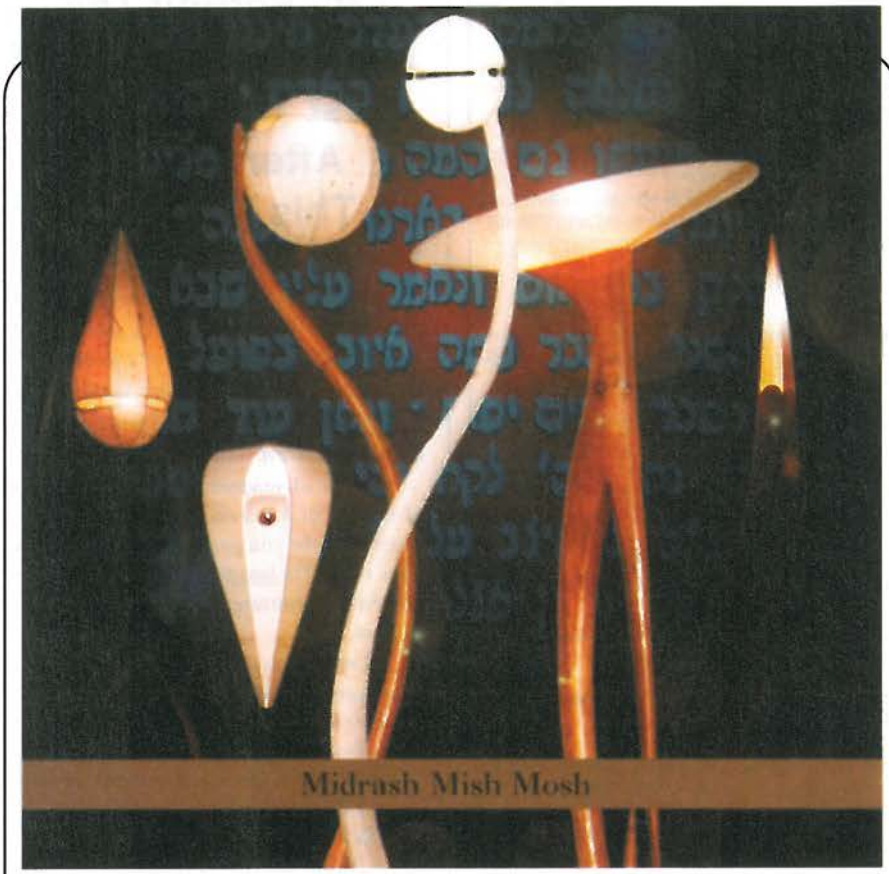

Aaron Alexander

Midrash Mish Mosh (Tzadik) ★★★★½

The Klezmer madness album to end all albums? The metal guitar meets clarinet instrumentation and *War Of The Worlds* arrangements of this insanely riff-heavy record make for a study in rhythmic fury and frenetically excitable themes. Drummer Alexander is a whirligig of cacophonous energy throughout, barely able to contain himself as his large-ish ensemble matches him note for knuckle. *MMM* is like a circus caravan, rolling through sensitive folk tunes, screwball urban blowouts, and complex bar mitzvah bashes that will have the good rabbi calling the police. Double drumming with **MICHAEL SARIN** adds to the thrill. **Ken Micallef**

Proggin'

Carl Palmer, Happy The Man, Spock's Beard by Mike Haid

On Volume 2 of the recent live-performance recordings from British progressive rock drumming icon **CARL PALMER**, *Working Live*, the fiery veteran continues in a power-trio format, replacing keyboards with guitar as the band performs classic cuts from the ELP catalog. Palmer's time and feel accelerate the tempos, pushing his bandmates to give their all. The closing track, "Fanfare For The Common Man," features a blistering drum solo. (Sanctuary)

The inventive American progressive group Happy The Man amassed an international cult following during their short run in the '70s. By popular demand they're back, with *The Muse Awakens*. On this batch of melodic, well-structured, and dynamic instrumental cuts, drummer **JOE BERGAMINI** impressively fills the shoes of original drummer Ron Riddle with musical, well-orchestrated chops. (Inside Out)

Although Spock's Beard has shifted musical directions a bit since the departure of singer/multi-instrumentalist Neal Morse, *Octane* proves they clearly remain strong contenders in the neo-prog genre. Drummer/vocalist **NICK D'VIRGILIO** struts versatile vocal chops and powerful, dynamic drumming as the band gracefully glides between classic and modern landscapes. (Inside Out)

Mastodon

Leviathan (Relapse) ★★★½

With a name like Mastodon and an album title like *Leviathan*, you'd *better* deliver a sonic beast of epic proportions. This band makes good on its words via ten imposing metallic hardcore cuts. **BRANN DAILOR**'s drumming is a tad unorthodox for the genre, particularly in his entertaining Mitch Mitchell–esque tom sprints. And the Pink Floydian "Joseph Merrick" even puts Dailor in a sparse, minimalist mode. Still, his syncopation and speed on tracks like "Seabeast" and "Megalodon" prove that Dailor has no trouble living up to Mastodon's allegiance to all things colossal. **Waleed Rashidi**

Matthew Shipp

Harmony And Abyss (Thirsty Ear) ★★★

Melding electronica, hip-hop, jazz improv, and modern classical composition, on this album pianist Matthew Shipp is supported by **William Parker**'s throbbing bass, the dramatic, loose rhythms of **GERALD CLEAVER**'s drums, and the atmospheric programming and manipulations of **Flam**. Cleaver navigates abstraction and electronic rhythms admirably, hearing the basslines while blending with programming and propelling the groove. Check out his freewheeling swing on "Galaxy 105" or the broken rhythms and gritty groove of "New ID." Whether darkly urbane or beautifully pastoral, this is unique and sometimes stunning music. **Martin Patmos**

Herbie Hancock V.S.O.P. Live

Under The Sky (Columbia/Legacy) ★★★★

A gathering of giants, the original V.S.O.P. quintet was rooted in the fabled Miles Davis '60s band of **Herbie Hancock**, **Wayne Shorter**, **Ron Carter**, and **TONY WILLIAMS**, aided by **Freddie Hubbard**. This charged 1979 Tokyo concert, previously only released in Japan, includes a new additional disc featuring the same set list performed the following night. Tony's in his power acoustic straight-ahead phase. On his composition "Pee Wee," Tony drives the band with a fast cymbal swing punctuated by explosive straight-8th-note drum bursts suggesting miniature rock solos. He's a bullet train that would flatten lesser soloists. Serious Tony fans take note. **Jeff Potter**

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Jimmy Smith
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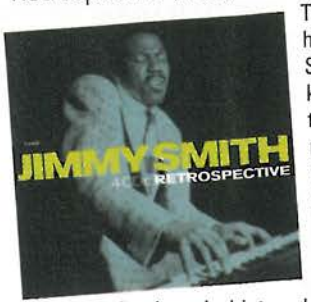


There are but two eras in Hammond history: Before Smith and After Smith. The hard-swinging, pedal-kicking jazzer with a blues heart transformed the B-3 organ into a modern, vital jazz instrument. This four-disc box anthologizes Smith's early groundbreaking years on Blue Note (1956-63). Drummer **DONALD BAILEY**, best known for his long residency with Smith, confirms his place in history here. His uncluttered hard-driving swing and soulful shuffle provided the perfect groove for the organist's flights. Other drummers are represented, including rousing **ART BLAKEY** tracks. But the bigger story is Bailey and his under-appreciated contributions to a classic sound and style. **Jeff Potter**

Adrian Belew Side 1 (Sanctuary) ♦♦½

If you're a fan of **Adrian Belew** (of King Crimson fame), you'll appreciate this CD. If you're expecting an hour of amazing performances by bassist **Les Claypool** and powerhouse drummer **DANNY CAREY**, you're likely to be underwhelmed. Aside from the hard-hitting "Ampersand" and the quirky funk of "Writing On The Wall," these highly influential musicians are practically invisible. The rest of the tracks are layered with electronic drums, samples, and loops, making it difficult to distinguish what's real and what's programmed. Compositionally, I applaud Belew for his bizarre vision. But this disc is far from what you would expect given the "power trio" tag it's been saddled with. **Michael Dawson**

Jordan Rudess Rhythm Of Time (Magna Carta) ♦♦♦♦

Take away blazing guest guitarists **Joe Satriani, Steve Morse, Vinnie Moore**, and **Greg Howe**, and basically what you're left with here is The Rudess Morgenstein Project, featuring the prog-rock talents of Dream Theater keyboardist Jordan Rudess and former Dixie Dregs drum master **ROD MORGENSTEIN**. Among all of Morgenstein's recent projects, none match the fire and drive of this one. As usual, Rod's remarkable ability to bring an undeniable groove to complex music is clearly evident. The heavy, odd-metered tracks especially showcase the drummer's highly developed musical sensibility. Can you say, "MD Hall Of Fame"? Sure ya' can! **Mike Haid**

Jethro Tull Nothing Is Easy: Live At The Isle Of Wight 1970 (Eagle) ♦♦♦½

The 1970 Isle Of Wight Festival arguably marked the end of hippie idealism—and the near end of early-era Jethro Tull. *Aqualung* would come out soon afterward, original drummer **CLIVE BUNKER** would leave the band, and **Ian Anderson** would embark on ever more progressive journeys. But here it's rough and raw, with piano and flute songs ("Bourée") contrasting let-it-all-hang-out rock ("Dharma For One"). For a basher, Bunker plays with finesse and swing—and occasionally more energy than required. He favors frenetic hand-foot fills, and somehow manages to share the spotlight with the riveting, flamboyant Anderson. **Michael Parillo**

Sound Tribe Sector Nine
Artifact (1320) ♦♦♦♦

STS9 is beloved in the jam band world, but set apart by their solid songwriting, use of space, attention to detail, avoidance of traditional solos, and textures that speak as a whole. On *Artifact*, drummer **ZACH VELMER** and percussionist **JEFREE LERNER** economically and powerfully skim over all kinds of live, sampled, looped, or otherwise re-created soundscapes. Velmer lends some organic drive to "Tokyo," plays a slick syncopated part with phased hi-hats over the piano loop on "Re-emergence," and fills around spoken-word samples with snippets of drum 'n' bass on "Native Son." **Robin Tolleson**

King's X Live All Over The Place (Brop!/Metal Blade) ♦♦♦½

Featuring equal parts venom and vigor, and chock full of acoustic/electric gems, this double live CD is progressive metal band King's X's strongest effort in years. **Doug Pinnick**'s golden voice and brassy impromptu rants are as soulful as a minister's sermon, **Ty Tabor**'s guitar runs are characteristically slinky and psychedelic, and drummer **JERRY GASKILL**'s kick-snare dialog is twisted and linear. Gaskill thumps his bass drum beater to melodic and metric shifts, as his shotgun snare strokes blast holes in these sometimes snaky rhythms. Prime cuts: "Manic Depression" (featuring Pearl Jam's **Jeff Ament**), "Over My Head," and "Believe." **Will Romano**

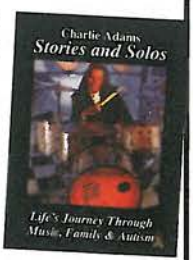
Of Further Interest

The Pink Floyd And Syd Barrett Story. Excellent DVD on the sad and extraordinary life of psychedelic rock's original mad genius. Features early clips and interviews with drummer **NICK MASON**. (www.voiceprint.co.uk) Also out, from Chronicle, is Mason's excellent new book, *Inside Out: A Personal History Of Pink Floyd.*

DAVID LICHT and The Klezmatics have two fascinating new CDs out, *Woody Guthrie's Happy Joyous Hanuka*, a collection of new songs put to lyrics by Woody Guthrie (www.klezmatics.com), and *Brother Moses Smote The Water*, with Joshua Nelson & Kathryn Farmer (www.piranha.de).

Looking For A Thrill is an unusual DVD from Thrill Jockey Records. Subtitled "An Anthology Of Inspiration," the package includes commentary from drummers **JANET BEAN** (11th Dream Day), **DAN BITNEY, JOHN MCENTIRE**, and **JOHN HERNDON** (Tortoise), **JOHN CONVERTINO** (Calexico), **HAMID DRAKE** (William Parker Quartet), **GEORGIA HUBLEY** (Yo La Tengo), **BEN MASSARELLA** (Califone), **DAN PETERS** (Mudhoney), **CHAD TAYLOR** (Chicago Underground Duo), and **YOSHIMI** (Boredoms).

CHARLIE ADAMS' *Stories & Solos* DVD features a documentary on the long-time Yanni drummer, as well as a shorter segment on his family's struggles with autism. The musical portion includes home videos, drum solos from Yanni concerts, clips from Charlie and Yanni's rock band, Chameleon, and footage from the making of the *Live At The Acropolis* video. A portion of the sale of the DVD benefits the Autism Society of America. (www.charlieadams.net)



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DVDs

Beginning Drum Volume Two, Starter Series

by Tim Pedersen (Hal Leonard)

level: beginner to intermediate, $9.95

This DVD packs a wallop in a small space. Starting out with a pleasant introduction, Pedersen moves directly into paradiddles and accents, eventually covering everything from simple 4/4 grooves and triplets to hand movement around a five piece kit. A nice touch is the split screen covering the hands and feet. The cinematography is never fancy, but the viewer always gets a clear view of the played example. Though some of the fills might be a bit advanced for the beginning drummer, *Beginning Drum Volume Two* is a nice start for any future drum god. **Fran Azzarto**

The Ultimate Drummers Weekend, 10th and 11th Anniversaries

(Hudson Music)

level: all, $29.95 (each)

The Ultimate Drummers Weekend is the largest drum festival held in Australia. TUDW celebrated its 10th anniversary with an all-star roster featuring The **DAVE WECKL** Band, **JOHN TEMPESTA**, **DOM FAMULARO**, and a host of international drummers including hometown favorite **VIRGIL DONATI**. Recording quality, festival footage, and user options, though not quite up to current hi-tech standards, are nonetheless adequate. The Dave Weckl and Virgil Donati workshops are the most entertaining and educational here. The 11th-anniversary disc closely follows the format of the 10th-anniversary show, featuring a slew of international players, many from Australia. Headlining artists included **THOMAS LANG**, **JOHN BLACKWELL JR.**, and **JIMMY DEGRASSO**. If you're interested in digging deeper into the talents of the international drumming community, then you'll find these DVDs a worthwhile purchase. **Mike Haid**

To hear many of the artists reviewed in this month's *Critique*, be sure to tune in to www.moderndrummer.com.

MD Radio

BOOKS

Ultimate Play-Along: Marco Minnemann

by Rick Gratton and Marco Minnemann (Warner Bros.)

level: advanced, $24.95 (with CD)

You'll need to put your thinking cap on for this one. This mind-bending book/CD package features seven intricate Minnemann tunes from his various recordings. Each tune is painstakingly transcribed note-for-note by Gratton, while Marco offers written analyses of the complex odd-meter material, including a transcribed breakdown of several key grooves and fills, plus extra practice suggestions. The CD includes Marco's extraordinary performances and music-minus-drums play-along tracks for all seven tunes, plus a burning bonus track from Marco. Also included are abbreviated play-along charts to use with the music-minus-drums play-along tracks. This is scary stuff, but it's well worth the challenge if you're ambitious enough to join the ranks of today's elite drummers. **Mike Haid**

Show Drumming: The Essential Guide To Playing Drumset For Live Shows And Musicals

by Ed Shaughnessy and Clem DeRosa (Hal Leonard)

level: all, $16.95 (includes CD)

After drumming for NBC's *Tonight Show* band for twenty-nine years, Ed Shaughnessy has a lot to share. Along with his sight-reading exercises, the drummer offers practical tips such as how to interpret a horn chart for drums, and how to accent a performance. He addresses creating energy and intensity without increasing volume on the kit, as well as slang musical terms not discussed in most music dictionaries. There are tips on how to best fold music for quick page turns, where to place your music stand—even the personal obligations of a professional musician. Shaughnessy and DeRosa share info that will serve drummers well in any musical situation. **Robin Tolleson**

Musical Time: A Source Book For Jazz Drumming

by Ed Soph (Carl Fischer)

level: beginner to advanced, $19.95 (with CD)

Playing time musically is what jazz drumming is all about. Master educator Ed Soph brings the basics to the forefront, emphasizing the importance of keeping solid, melodic time in a jazz setting. Soph clearly explains the essentials of learning and practicing swing time and logically setting up the drums in a jazz setting. His philosophy and written exercises using a swinging quarter-note ride cymbal pattern are solid lessons in discipline and simplicity. Each exercise graduates in difficulty and includes shuffle patterns, non-repetitive ride patterns, and playing with dynamic balance. The play-along CD covers each example performed by his superb jazz trio. The DVD (sold separately) is beneficial in achieving a deeper understanding of Soph's philosophies. **Mike Haid**

Taking The Reins

New drummer-led releases on CD

Beto Hale, *Sube*, www.betohale.com
Branden Harper, *Tangents*, www.ambientmood.com
Carl Hupp Project, *Hyper Statue*, www.carlhupp.com
Al Ashley, *These Are Them*, www.jazzpromoservices.com
Jon Brion, *I Heart Huckabees* OST, www.foxsearchlight.com
Daniel Cater/**Gregg Keplinger**/Reuben Radding, *Not Out For Anywhere*, www.soldisk.com

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- Impact Industries (www.impactind.com).
- The Gibraltar snare stand is compliments of Kaman Music (www.gibraltarhardware.com).
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Consumer Disclosure

1. Visit www.moderndrummer.com, look for the EPEK Snare Giveaway button, and follow the entry instructions. Or send a 3.5" x 5.5" or 4" x 6" postcard with your name, address, telephone number, and email address to: MD/EPEK Snare Contest, 12 Old Bridge Road, Cedar Grove, NJ 07009. **2.** Enter as often as you wish, but each hand-written entry must be mailed separately. **3.** ODDS OF WINNING DEPEND ON THE NUMBER OF ELIGIBLE ENTRIES RECEIVED. **4.** CONTEST BEGINS 4/1/2005 AND ENDS 5/31/2005. POSTCARDS MUST BE POSTMARKED BY 5/31/2005 AND RECEIVED BY 6/6/2005. **5.** Grand Prize Drawing: Winner will be selected by random drawing on June 13, 2005. Winner will be notified by phone on or about June 15, 2005. **6.** Employees and their immediate families of Modern Drummer, EPEK Percussion, Kaman Music, Impact Industries, Joshua Tree Percussion, Ego Drum Supply, Puresound Percussion, and D'Addario Canada, and their affiliates are ineligible. **7.** Sponsor is not responsible for lost, misdirected, and/or delayed entries. **8.** Open to residents of the US and Canada, 18 years of age or older. Void in Quebec, Canada, and where prohibited by law. **9.** Grand Prize: One (1) 14x5 1/2 EPEK Legacy Exotic stave custom snare drum, one (1) Gibraltar flat base 8606 snare stand, one (1) Impact Industries snare case, and one (1) box of ten (10) Evans G1 Power Center Reverse Dot heads. Approximate retail price: $2,230. **10.** Sponsored by Modern Drummer Publications, Inc., 12 Old Bridge Road, Cedar Grove, NJ 07009, (973) 239-4140. **11.** This game subject to the complete Official Rules. For a copy of the complete Official Rules or the winner's name, send a self-addressed, stamped envelope to: Modern Drummer Publications/EPEK Percussion/Official Rules/Winners List, 12 Old Bridge Road, Cedar Grove, NJ 07009.

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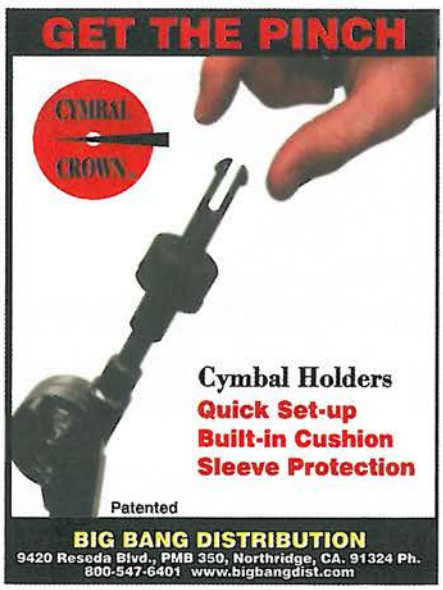

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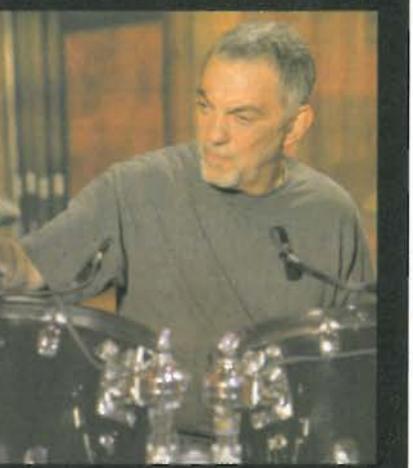
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To Celebrate their 10th anniversary, KoSA is awarding six scholarships to attend their annual International Percussion workshop. Winners will experience a thrilling week of intense, hands-on percussion training with the finest artists in the world. The workshop will be held on the Castleton State College campus in Castleton, Vermont, this July 25 to 31. To enter, you simply have to write a 200-word paragraph describing why attending KOSA's 10th Anniversary Workshop is important to you. The prize package includes full tuition, room, and food.

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"Ten years ago," recalls KoSA artistic director and founder Aldo Mazza, "we began KoSA to fill a need and to bring the attention of music and all its positive power to as many as we could. The KoSA Workshop is a world-class program with the best faculty, facilities, courses, and events. The goal is to do more than just connect participants with the greatest professionals, professors, and performers, but to bring to the table an expanded philosophy. Music is the only universal language. It transcends all social, economic, cultural, and political boundaries. Within every KoSA project, the core message is that with the sharing of music, the world works better. Much better."

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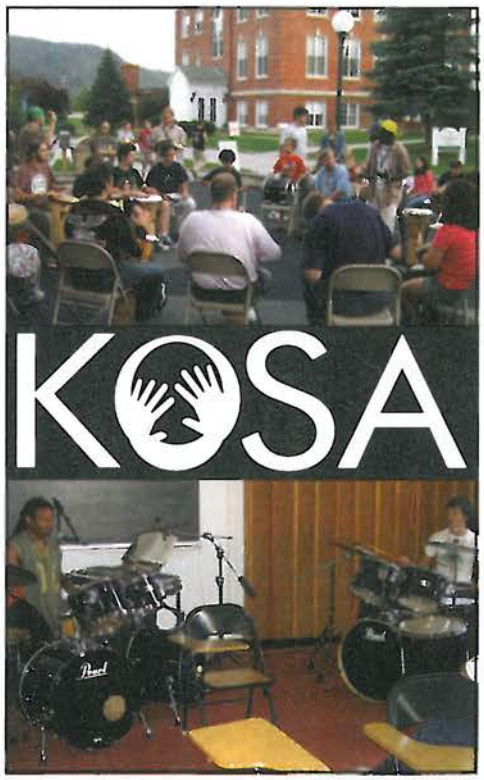

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1. Send a paragraph with your name, address, email, and telephone number to: MD/KOSA 10th Anniversary Contest, 12 Old Bridge Road, Cedar Grove, NJ 07009. 2. A distinguished panel of judges will evaluate each written entry and determine the winners. 3. ODDS OF WINNING EACH PRIZE DEPEND ON THE NUMBER OF ELIGIBLE ENTRIES RECEIVED AND THE QUALITY OF THE WRITING. 4. CONTEST BEGINS 4/1/05 AND ENDS 5/31/05. LETTERS MUST BE POSTMARKED BY 5/31/05 AND RECEIVED BY 6/3/05. 6. Prize Drawing: Six (6) winners will be selected on or before June 21, 2005. Winners will be notified by phone on or about June 21, 2005. 6. Employees and their immediate families of Modern Drummer, Sabian, Evans, Pro-Mark, Drum Workshop, Tama, and Pearl, and their affiliates, are ineligible. 7. Sponsor is not responsible for lost, misdirected, and/or delayed entries. 8. Open to residents of the US and Canada, 18 years of age or older. Void in Florida, in Quebec, Canada, and where prohibited by law. 9. Prize: Six (6) scholarships to KoSA 10th Anniversary Workshop. Prize includes tuition and room (double occupancy) and food for the one-week workshop. Transportation to and from Castleton, Vermont is the winner's responsibility. Approximate retail value: $6,000. 10. The judges' decisions are final. No prize substitutions will be permitted. 11. Sponsored by Modern Drummer Publications, Inc., 12 Old Bridge Road, Cedar Grove, NJ 07009, (973) 239-4140. 12. This game subject to the complete Official Rules. For a copy of the complete Official Rules or the winners' names, send a self-addressed, stamped envelope to: Modern Drummer Publications/KoSA 10th Anniversary/Official Rules/Winners List, 12 Old Bridge Road, Cedar Grove, NJ 07009.

Batuka! International Drum Fest

The ninth Batuka! International Drum Fest was presented this past November 27–28 at the Funarte Theater in Sao Paulo, Brazil. Drum enthusiasts from across South America enjoyed performances by talented up-and-comers and world-class professionals. The event was founded by Brazilian drum star **Vera Figueiredo**, who operates her own drum school in Sao Paulo (www.verafigueiredo.com.br).

Opening the show was fourteen-year-old **Guilherme Figueiredo**, who performed to celebrate the release of the second *Batuka!* CD. This compilation of previous Drum Fest performances is dedicated to the memory of *MD* founder Ron Spagnardi, jazz great Elvin Jones, and Brazilian percussion stars Milton Banana, Toninho Pinheiro, Dirceu Medeiros, and Edison Machado. Guilherme was followed by the finals of the Batukinha! national contest for drummers up to thirteen years of age. **Léo Aragão** (seven), **Jean Galocha** (ten), and **Elóy Casagrande** (thirteen) each gave expressive performances, with Elóy ultimately being named the winner.

Brazilian virtuoso **Daniel Baeder** played to tracks from his upcoming solo CD, and honored Vera Figueiredo (his former teacher) with a song dedicated to her. In the finals of the Batuka! national contest for drummers over thirteen, **Tiago Domingues** (twenty-four), **Jéfinho Batera** (twenty-one), and **Vaney Bertotto** (twenty-three) engaged in a spirited competition that ended in victory for Vaney. **Douglas Las Casas** and his band Três de Paus closed the first day's show.

The second day opened with a drum quartet dubbed **Casa de Marimbondo**, featuring drum teachers **Alex Reis**, **Daniel Gohn**, **Jayme Pladevall**, and **Pepa D'Elia**. In addition to their drumset performances, they also played innovative four-snare compositions. Argentinean drummer **Gustavo Meli** followed with an inspiring presentation. The charismatic Meli talked about the study process he went through, highlighting the importance of discipline in order to achieve a goal.

Jojo Mayer closed the night playing drum 'n' bass, jungle, speed garage, and other "electronic" styles on his acoustic kit. Jojo demonstrated hand and foot technique, and also discussed the importance of the mind as the engine of the learning process.

Gustavo Meli excited the crowd with his dynamic technique and musicality.

Batuka! producer and Brazilian drum star Vera Figueiredo (right) presented the finalists of the Batukinha! contest for drummers up to thirteen. From left: winner Elóy Casagrande, with runners-up Jean Galocha and Léo Aragão.

Brazilian virtuoso Daniel Baeder performed to tracks from his debut CD.

Thiago Figueiredo

Sponsors for Batuka! 2004 included Audix, Evans, Le Son Microphones, Liverpool Drumsticks, Luen Drumheads, Michael Drums, Pinguim Drums, Pithy Cajones, Pro-Mark, Sabian, Sonor, Staff Drums, and Vic Firth. For information on the 2005 Batuka! International Drum Fest, go to www.batukabrasil.com.

Thiago Figueiredo

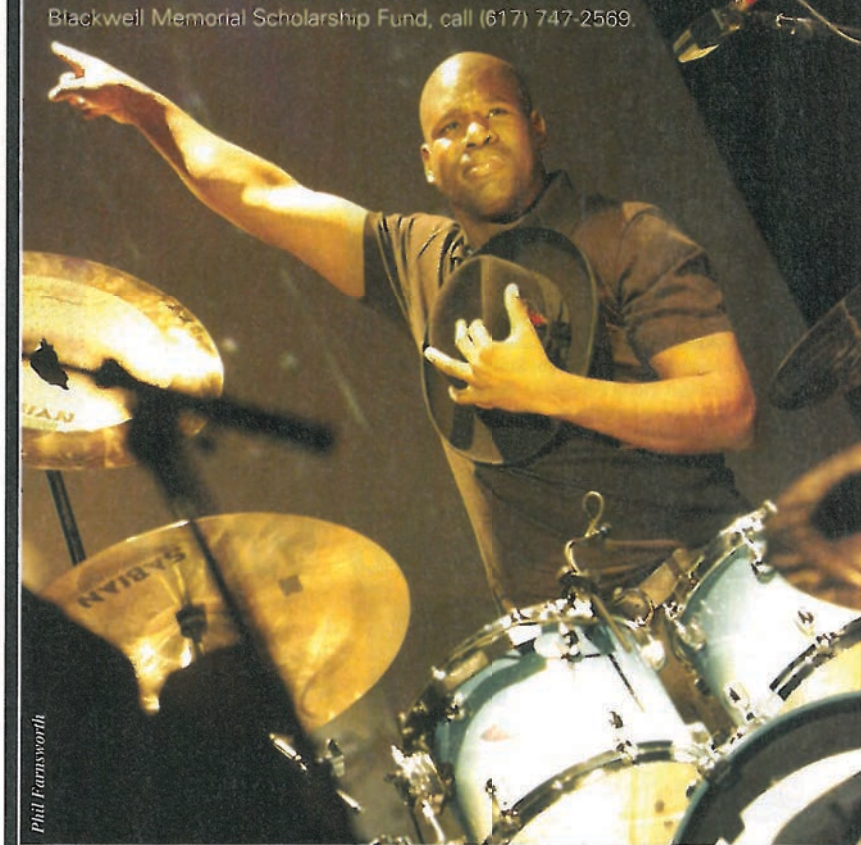
Jojo Mayer (right) discussed bass drum technique with the help of translator Daniel Oliveira.

Jia Blackwell Memorial Concert

This past December 11, Prince drummer **John Blackwell** returned to his alma mater, Boston's Berklee College Of Music, to host a benefit concert dubbed "4 Ever In Our Hearts, A Tribute To Jia Kennie Blackwell." The event, sponsored by Sabian with support from Tama, Vater, and Headfirst, raised $20,000 for a scholarship fund in memory of John's late daughter.

Blackwell was on Prince's *Musicology* tour when he learned that his daughter had accidentally drowned. He and his wife Joann decided to memorialize their daughter with a scholarship to support outstanding female musicians at Berklee. A portion of the proceeds from the concert will also be used to promote water safety.

Many of Blackwell's drumming friends performed, including **Dom Famularo**, **Vinnie Colaiuta**, **Dennis Chambers**, **Terri Lyne Carrington**, **Kim Thompson**, **Marcus Williams**, and **Mike Mangini** (who filled in for Jeff Watts). The event proved to be an unforgettable night of funk, R&B, and jazz. To make a contribution to the Jia Kennie Blackwell Memorial Scholarship Fund, call (617) 747-2569.



Phil Farnsworth

Indy Quickies

Latin Percussion recently held an artist photo shoot at Center Staging Musical Productions in Burbank, California. With a theme of "LA Loves LP," the shoot brought together most of LP's LA-based artists, along with

some top music-industry figures. The event was hosted by LP artist relations manager Steve Nigohosian, education coordinator Memo Acevedo, and founder Martin Cohen. Artists included **Richie Garcia**, **Walfredo Reyes Jr.**, **Kevin Ricard**, **Vicki Randle**, **Ron Powell**, **Gregg Bissonette**, **Lenny Castro**, **Melena**, **Denise Fraser**, **Brendon Buckley**, **Cassio Duarte**, **John Mahon**, **Stephen Perkins**, **Zoro**, and **Vinnie Colaiuta**.

From left: Kaman district manager Steven Spar, Toca product manager Victor Filonovich, Sheila E, Toca artist relations manager Kim Graham, Music Central owner John Epofanio, LP director of marketing Jim Rockwell, and Sheila E manager Lynn Mabrey.

Drum/percussion star **Sheila E** recently packed the house for a solo concert at Landis Intermediate School in Vineyard, New Jersey. The concert, sponsored by **Toca Percussion**, Music Central, and the city of Vineland, fell within the city's mandate to reach out to its diverse population. The audience consisted of Landis pupils, Music Central music students, children from the Vineland Children's Residential Center, and fans of all ages. Sheila's ninety-minute performance combined playing with anecdotes and educational tips. At one point, she invited members of the audience to accompany her on stage.

Alfred Publishing, a world leader in educational music products, has announced an agreement to purchase **Warner Bros. Publications** from Warner Music Group. Warner Bros. Publications prints and distributes a broad selection of sheet music, videos, DVDs, books, orchestrations and arrangements, and other tutorial material.

Under the agreement, Alfred will acquire the entire Warner Bros. Publications business. In addition, Alfred will have the right to continue to print and distribute editions of musical compositions administered by Warner/Chappell.

In Memoriam

Frank Isola

Frank Isola, a 1950s-era jazz drummer popular for his flowing swing style and unobtrusive accompaniment, died this past December 11 at the age of seventy-nine. Isola was known for his recorded work with saxophonists Stan Getz and Gerry Mulligan between 1947 and 1957. He also performed with Peggy Lee, Claude Thornhill, and Elliot Lawrence, and recorded with Charlie Parker, Helen Merrill, and Mose Allison.

In 1957 Isola settled in Detroit, where he played locally and occasionally joined old colleagues for reunions. He played some Chicago dates in the 1960s, and in the following decade he appeared in New York. In 1994 he recorded with pianist (and fellow Getz alumni) John Williams, as well as with saxophonist Franz Jackson and trumpeter Marcus Belgrave at the Windsor Jazz Festival in Detroit.

Frank Russell Lewellen

Frank "Russ" Lewellen died this past December 28 in Birmingham, Alabama, at the age of sixty-four. Originally from Uniontown, Pennsylvania, Russ had relocated to Birmingham after ten years of road work with a big band that was based there. His career as a jazz and big band drummer dated back to the 1950s and '60s, following his graduation from Berklee College Of Music at the age of seventeen.

In the 1980s and early '90s Russ was a frequent contributor to *Modern Drummer*'s column roster. His articles often combined his folksy sense of humor with the wisdom he had gained through years of experience.

Who's Using What

Jazz/funk great **Mike Clark** is now playing Paiste cymbals.

Yamaha's artist roster now includes **Bogie Bowles** (Kenny Wayne Shepherd).

Los Lonely Boys drummer **Ringo Garza** is using Audio-Technica microphones.

Jordan Plosky is playing Slingerland drums and Meinl cymbals on tour with Ryan Cabrera.

Lee Finkelstein (Blues Brothers, Funk Filharmonik) is playing Evans drumheads.

New Factory Metal Percussion artists include **Tommy Lee**, **Walfredo Reyes Jr.**, **Gary Novak**, **Richie "Gajate" Garcia**, **Jerry Marotta**, **Daniel De Los Reyes**, **Emil Richards**, and **Brady Blade**.

Toca has added **Remy Antoun** (Seal) to its artist roster.

Richie Morales is endorsing Aquarian drumheads.

Studio drummer (and occasional *MD* author) **Andy James** is endorsing DW pedals and AKG microphones.

Adam Aaronson (The High Speed Scene), **Brad Morgan** (Drive By Truckers), and **James Branham** (Crossfade) are new Meinl cymbal artists. Now playing Meinl percussion is **Brian Rosenworcel** (Guster).

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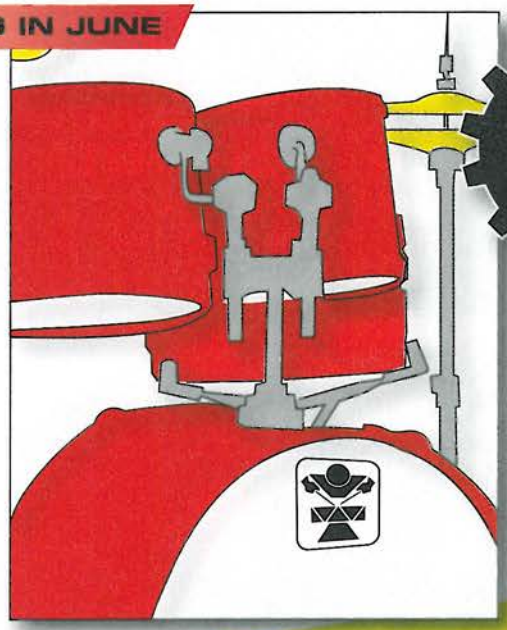

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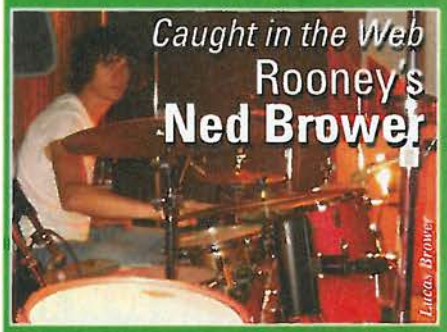

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Donny Osborne (Mel Tormé)
courtesy of Drum Workshop and Zildjian

artist appearances subject to availability and may change without notice

Sunday Clinics

Joel Spencer (independent)
courtesy of Premier, Steve Maxwell Drums, Regal Tip and Aquarian

Dick Schory (former Director of Marketing, Ludwig Drum Co.)
courtesy of Rebeats

Todd Sucherman (Styx)
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Not So Heavy Metal

Peter O'Gorman is a percussionist, composer, and teacher in Minneapolis/St. Paul. He was recently commissioned to write a piece for Joe Chvala & The Flying Foot Forum, a nationally known percussive dance company. The composition, called *Trines*, involved solo percussion and tap dancing. Peter wanted to juxtapose the sound of metal on wood (the dancers' taps on the wood floor) with the sound of wood on metal. So he created the unique metal-percussion setup shown here, which he played with wood sticks.

The kit includes a variety of Pete Engelhart metal percussion instruments, including a Reco Reco, "The Snail," three Satellite Drums, a Ribbon Crasher, castanets, a small Custom Crasher, and a clave bell (played with the left bass drum pedal). A Latin Percussion cowbell is played with the right bass drum pedal. A Plugs-Perc Sizzle Strip, two traditional Chinese Jing cymbals, and a set of five Paiste cup chimes complete the kit. Stands and mounts from Axis, LP, Yamaha, Rhythm Tech, DW, Meinl, Gibraltar, and Paiste are used to support everything.

PHOTO REQUIREMENTS

1. Photos must be high-quality and in color. 35mm slides are preferred; color prints will be considered; Polaroids not accepted. 2. You may send more than one view of the kit. 3. Only show drums, no people. 4. Shoot drums against a neutral background. Avoid "busy" backgrounds. 5. Clearly highlight special attributes of your kit. Send photo(s) to: Kit Of The Month, Modern Drummer, 12 Old Bridge Road, Cedar Grove, NJ 07009-1288. Photos cannot be returned.

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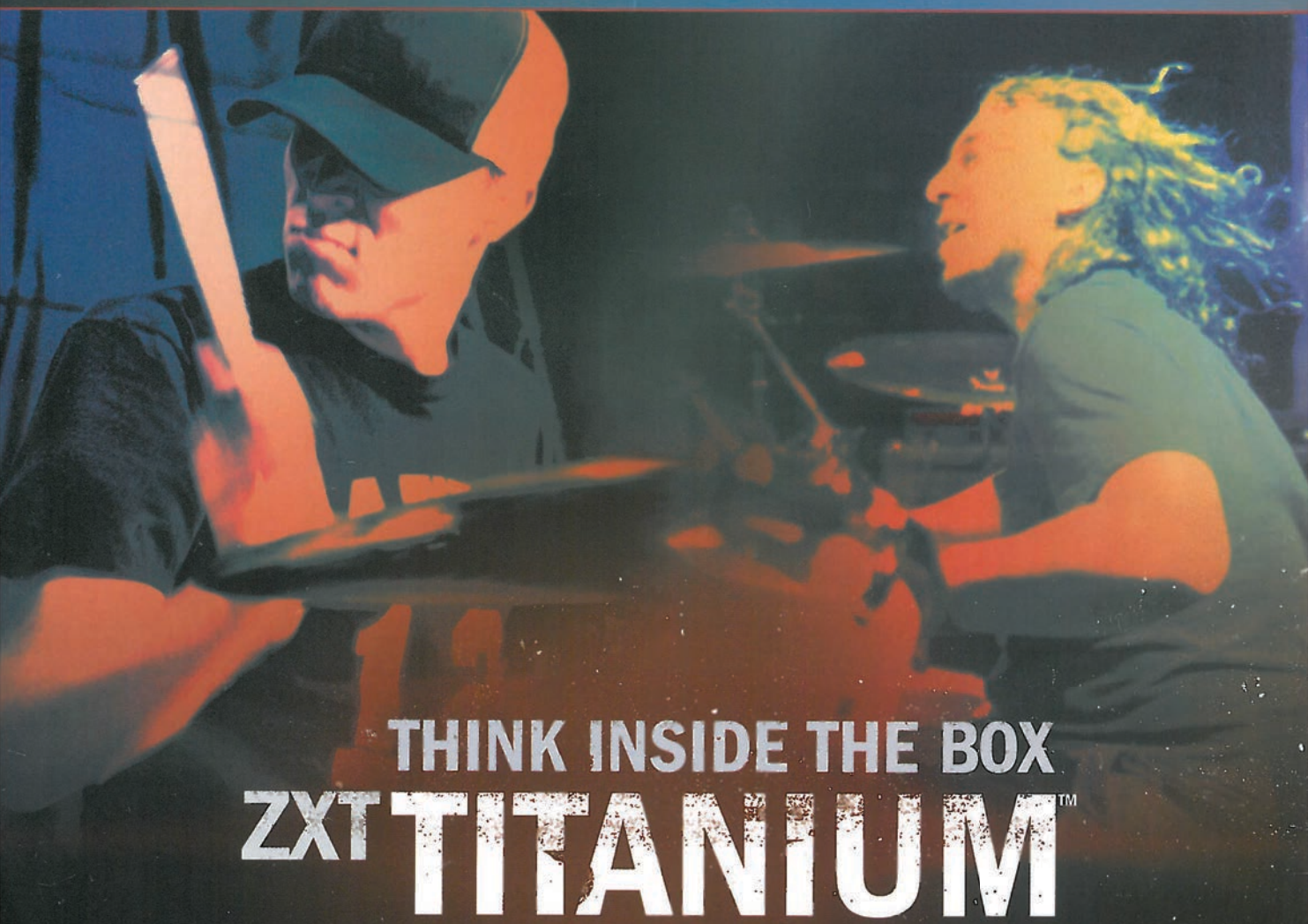

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